TELOS

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Department of Sociology
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*The Politics of the Crisis Theory: Toward the Critique of Automatic Marxism II**

by Russell Jacoby

The critique of bourgeois society—Marxism—has also succumbed to it. The increasing specialization of labor, manual and intellectual, fractures Marxism. This phenomenon, if obvious, is largely ignored. It is a truism that today there are Marxist philosophers, sociologists, economists who are more committed to and learned in their separate fields than in Marxism as a whole. But this statement confesses more than it states. For it would seem that the Marxism of Karl Marx bound a politics and economics into a distinct unity, however unstable, a political economy. If this unity no longer exists what does this mean for Marxists and Marxism? More precisely, if the core of Marxism, its economics has evolved—decayed?—into a technical specialty incomprehensible to other Marxists and distant from any definite political project, is this a statement about Marxism, bourgeois society, or simply individual theorists? Or all three?

A preliminary response might suggest that Marxism as a 'political economy' was never a simple addition of politics and economics; and from the beginning both these moments tended to separate or collapse into one. To Marx himself the economic analysis could not be abstracted from a political dimension; if there was a unity of theory and praxis it occurred at the intersection of an economic and political plane. "The struggle of class against class is a political struggle."[1] 'Economism,' the reduction of an economic-political struggle to a simple economic one has surfaced throughout the history of socialism in various forms, syndicalism, anarchism, reformism. Most Marxists have resisted it. From this perspective the more recent separation of politics and economics could be interpreted as a new type of economism *or* as a further loosening of the original political-economic relation.

Yet this might be insufficient, obscuring both the complexity of the original relationship as well as the nature of the subsequent transformation. The following pages seek to shed some light on this elusive relationship by exploring the history and politics of the crisis theory. The crisis theory is especially interesting because it presents the problem of Marxist political economy in its most provocative form; the crisis theory is at once an economic theory and a political one. It draws together the objective and economic moment in Marxism with the subjective and political moment.

* The first part, "Towards a Critique of Automatic Marxism: The Politics of Philosophy from Lukács to the Frankfurt School," appeared in *Telos* 10 (Winter, 1971).

1. K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (New York, 1963), p. 173.

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But nothing seems to fit; a decisive political intervention seems dependent on the theory and fact of an (objective) collapse, if such intervention is not to be reduced to tinkering within the existing apparatus. Yet the objective theory of the collapse seems also to relegate the subject to a passive spectator.[2] Subject and object seem incomplete apart, and incomprehensible together. To place at the beginning a more specific case of the problem: historically the 'mechanistic' theory of the collapse has been associated with the politics of spontaneity, from Luxemburg to Mattick. Conversely, the rejection of the objective collapse in the name of consciousness and subjectivity has been associated with a passive and reform politics. This is a preliminary statement, and needs qualification.

It should be noted that this essay is not only about the ambiguity compressed into Marxist political economy, but is also an expression of it—and perhaps has fallen victim to it. That is: for those schooled in the politics and philosophy of Marxism the economic substance presented here may seem, if not obscure, irrelevant. Similarly, to those acquainted with Marxist economics, the economics presented here may seem, if not imperfect, encumbered with extraneous political and philosophical considerations. Such objections, even if accurate, may only testify to the importance of the problem and spur more adequate treatment.[3]

I

A confrontation with the crisis theory requires a textual and contextual glance at its first formulation in nineteenth century Russia. It is an irony frequently commented upon that Marx first received extensive and intensive attention from non-industrialized Russia; this, however, only begins the irony. The first Marxist theory of the crisis was worked out by Russian populists in the name of agrarian socialism. They embraced Marx's writings not simply as a critique of capitalism, but its industrial successor, socialism. They found in *Capital* not only a moral and ethical exposé of capitalism, but proof of capitalism's inability to persist and grow in Russia—or proof that capitalism would collapse. They found in Marx an implicit endorsement of the possibility of a non-capitalist route to a peasant oriented socialism—a socialism that bypassed urban industrialization. This first reading of Marxism, and the first response that it stimulated from the Russian legal Marxists, raised the issue of the crisis of capitalism and its political interpretation.

The many varieties of Russian populism are rooted in the complexities of the Slavophile-Western knot which has been tied in as many forms as

2. Colletti in "The Theory of the Crash," *Telos* 13 (Fall, 1972), expresses the problem quite precisely.

3. After this essay was completed G. Marramao's "Zum Verhältnis von politischer Oekonomie und kritischer Theorie" (*Aesthetik und Kommunikation* 11 [April, 1973]) was brought to my attention. In many ways, both in its argument and the material it draws upon, it is close to this essay. A translation is planned for a future issue of *Telos*.

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decades in the nineteenth century. In a sentence, the controversy turned on the interpretation of Russian development; to what degree it would (or should) recapitulate Western institutions or would (or should) nurture its own Slavic traditions.[4] It might seem that the Slavophiles were simply reactionaries, celebrating native institutions, be it serfdom or the church. And so many were; but the Populists inherited one element of the Slavophile tradition which was transmitted by Alexander Herzen.[5] Herzen, unsettled by the social costs of industrialization he witnessed in Western Europe, and disillusioned with the failures of the revolutions of 1848, hoped that Russia might bypass the Western stage on the way to socialism.[6]

The shortcut—or longcut—that Herzen discovered and rediscovered to avoid the damages of Western industrialization was the ancient peasant institution of the commune, the *mir*.[7] This appeared to be the incarnation of the non-individualist anti-capitalist community. As such it was not only socialist in practice, but could serve as the nucleus for a Russian socialism that would avoid Western industrialization. "You can see what a blessing it is for Russia that the rural commune has never been broken up," wrote Herzen in 1851, "that private ownership has never replaced the property of the commune; how fortunate it is for the Russian people that they have remained outside all political movements, and for that matter outside European civilization, which would undoubtedly have sapped the life of the commune."[8]

The interest in the *mir* was passed on to later populists who ironically, but not without reason, turned to Marx as an ally in their argument that capitalism was not viable in Russia; they wanted to prove that capitalism was a damaging social system confined to the West, and that the *mir* would generate an alternative socialism side-stepping capitalism. Marx was received as a critic of capitalism, but not as an advocate of a proletarian movement. That the political project could be detached from the economic analysis was not only due to a misreading, as Marx and Engels themselves were at least half receptive to the idea. In any case it was these populists who developed the first crisis theory based on Marx's works.[9]

4. Cf. N. Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea* (Boston, 1962), pp. 39f.

5. For the relation of populism to pan-Slavism see J.H. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture* (New York, 1970), pp. 397f. Cf. E.H. Carr, *Studies in Revolution* (New York, 1964), pp. 94f.

6. A. Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts: The Memoirs of Alexander Herzen* (London, 1968), vol. II, p. 787.

7. Herzen sought to avert the danger of succumbing to a reactionary Slavism. Cf. M. Malia, *Alexander Herzen and the Birth of Russian Socialism* (New York, 1965), p. 402.

8. A. Herzen, "The Russian People and Socialism," in *From the Other Shore* (Cleveland and New York, 1963), p. 189.

9. For a survey of populist economic theories, apart from subsequent citations, see T.H. von Laue, "The Fate of Capitalism in Russia: The Narodnik Version," *The American Slavic and East European Review*, XIII, 1 (February, 1954), and S.M. Schwarz, "Populism and Early Russian Marxism on Ways of Economic Development of Russia," in *Continuity and Change in Russian and Soviet Thought*, ed. E. Simmons (Cambridge, Mass., 1954).

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By the late 1870s V. Vorontsov, a 'legal' populist, had worked out in rough fashion a crisis theory of capitalism, at least as it applied to Russia.[10] If it could be shown, on the basis of Marx's *Capital*, that capitalism would destroy itself, this would confirm the populist search for a non-capitalist source of socialism. As Vorontsov wrote in the foreword to his book, *The Destiny of Capitalism in Russia* (1882), "The party of the people [the populists] would have gained a great deal in practical respects...if its faith in the viability of popular principles had been united with a conviction of the historical impossibility of the development of capitalist production in Russia."[11] Vorontsov pointed to two reasons for the impossibility of capitalist development: 1) the lack of foreign markets and 2) the lack of internal markets.

To Vorontsov and other legal populists (legal as opposed to a terrorist populist tradition), such as N.F. Danielson, the Russian translator of *Capital*, the absence of a market was grounded in two other facts or observations: the first was the inability of Russia to find a foreign market both because a) Russia was 'late' in arriving on the international scene and the market was already dominated by Western countries and b) Russia's more primitive industrial structure could not produce competitive goods; secondly the absence of an internal or domestic market was due to the very logic of capitalist development: to wit, capitalism necessarily destroyed its own home market by impoverishing workers and peasants as it industrialized. This second reason evidently feeds into the first; if the domestic markets are disappearing, the foreign markets are irreplaceable. One summary of the legal populist argument put it this way: "forced industrialization at the price of heavy burdens on the peasantry destroyed the domestic consumption market indispensable" for industrialization.[12]

This economic reasoning seconded the more general populist belief that capitalism was a uniquely Western phenomenon, and that native Russian institutions could serve as the nucleus for a Russian socialism. To be emphasized, is that this was a Marxist reading, that is, an interpretation of capitalism and Russia based on Marx. The populists considered themselves Marxists, though historically it was the opponents of the populists, the legal Marxists, who gained that title.[13] Moreover, the Marxists with whom Marx and Engels were in closest contact, were in fact the populists. This Russian

10. For Vorontsov, see A. Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism* (London, 1969), pp. 113f.

11. Cited in T. Dan, *The Origins of Bolshevism* (New York, 1970), p. 142.

12. A.P. Mendel, *Dilemmas of Progress in Tsarist Russia: Legal Marxism and Legal Populism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), p. 47.

13. Pipes discusses that the term populist was a polemical one used by some Marxists; see R. Pipes, *Struve: Liberal on the Left* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), p. 84. Tugan-Baranovsky seems to confirm this when he mentions that the opponents of the Marxists, "the populists," "were moreover also named Marxists," Tugan-Baranowsky, *Studien zur Theorie und Geschichte der Handelskrisen in England* (Jena, 1901), p. 199. Walicki takes issue with Pipes' formulations on this; see Walicki, *Controversy*, pp. 6f.

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interest in Marx was an "irony of fate" that was noticed by Marx himself as well as by later observers. Marx himself, however, late in life, was increasingly fascinated by Russian developments, and undertook to master Russian.[14] In 1881 Marx was drawn directly into the debate as Vera Zasulich on behalf of the Marxists wrote to Marx asking his opinion on the Russian controversy. "In recent times we hear it often said that the commune is an archaic form which...history has condemned to destruction. Those who so prophesize call themselves your students—'Marxists.'... You understand, citizen, how much your opinion on this question would interest us and what a great service you would perform if you set forth your view of the possible fate of our commune and of the historical necessity that all lands of the world pass through all phases of capitalist development."[15]

All of Marx's utterances to and on the Russian situation cannot be considered here.[16] The following must suffice: Marx took very seriously Zasulich's inquiry, and no less than four drafts of a response exist, three of which are much longer and richer than the letter sent. (One draft included an aside indicating how distant Marx was from the 'Marxists' and how close to the populists: "The Russian 'Marxists' of whom you speak are completely unknown to me. The Russians with whom I am in personal contact, so far as I know, hold completely opposite opinions.")[17] In his letter to Zasulich, in a letter on Mikhailovsky,[18] and in the introduction to the second Russian edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx gave some qualified support to the idea that the *mir* could serve as the kernel of a non-Western route to socialism—or at least he did not rule out that possibility.

To Zasulich, citing passages from *Capital*, he noted that his account of the rise of capitalism was "*expressly* limited to the *countries of western Europe*" and provided "no reasons for or against the vitality of the rural community;" yet his own researches convinced him that "this community is the mainspring of Russia's social regeneration" if "the deleterious influences which assail it from every quarter" could be eliminated.[19] The Marx-Engels introduction put the problem this way: "Can the Russian *mir*—a strong if undermined archaic form of communal ownership of land—pass imme-

14. Marx, *Letters to Kugelmann* (New York, 1934), p. 77. Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence* (Moscow, 1965), p. 312.

15. Cited in Marx and Engels, *Werke* (Berlin, 1972), vol. 19, p. 572. I am translating her letter from the German which itself is a translation from the French. Zasulich herself, it could be noted, illustrates the intensity of the Russian revolutionary developments, as just three years prior to this letter she had been associated with terrorists and had shot the governor of St. Petersburg at "point blank range," F. Venturi, *Roots of Revolution* (New York, 1966), p. 596.

16. See the collection with Nachwort by M. Rubel, Marx and Engels, *Die russische Kommune* (München, 1972). Cf. H. Krause, *Marx und Engels und das zeitgenössische Russland* (Giessen, 1958).

17. Marx and Engels, *Werke*, 19, p. 397.

18. Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, pp. 311f. See Plekhanov's discussion of this letter, *The Monist View of History* (New York, 1972), pp. 236f.

19. Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 340.

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diately into a higher form of communist communal ownership? Or must it on the contrary first pass through the same process of dissolution which makes up the historical development of the west?" "The single answer which today is possible is this: if the Russian Revolution is the signal of proletarian revolution in the west, so that both complete each other [*so dass beide einander ergänzen*] then the present Russian communal ownership of the land can serve as the starting point for a communist development."[20]

Such formulations were sufficiently sympathetic to be interpreted positively by the populists, but sufficiently qualified to be interpreted as critiques of the populists by the Marxists. Engels, after the death of Marx, frequently criticized the mode of the controversy which used Marx quotations as ammunition—a mode which would have a great future; passages would be taken out of the "writings and letters of Marx in a very contradictory manner, exactly as if they were texts from the classics or from the New Testament."[21] Engels himself, impressed with the progress in Russian industrialization, moved decisively away from the populist position, considering the *mir* as doomed.[22] He wrote to Danielson, that Marx's qualified prediction of a capitalist development for Russia seemed to be accurate. "I fear we will soon consider the *mir* as a dream of the past, and in the future reckon on a capitalist Russia. Undoubtedly a great dream will be lost with it, but one can do nothing against economic facts."[23]

Plekhanov, the 'first' emphatically Russian Marxist, had in "Our Differences" (1885) written off the *mir*. According to Plekhanov the emancipation of the serfs had "dislodged the commune from the stable equilibrium of natural economy and delivered it over to the power of all the laws of commodity production and capitalist accumulation." Because "all the principles of contemporary economy" were in "irreconciliable hostility to the commune" "its further independent 'development'" was out of the question.[24] Plekhanov was actually more concerned with philosophical and political critiques of populism than the economic ones; the latter was the domain of the legal Marxists and Lenin.

Two 'readings' of Marx crystalized, each of which established a distinct relationship between economics and politics.[25] The economic argument that the populists advanced drew upon *Capital* to demonstrate that capitalism lays waste its own home market. For Russia this barred capitalist development; and politically it meant that the non-capitalist path to socialism was the only path. Yet, their economic analysis assumed another

20. Marx and Engels, *Werke*, 19, p. 296. Cf. the discussion in S. Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 152-153, and G. Lichtheim, *Marxism* (New York, 1965), pp. 327-328.

21. Marx and Engels, *Die russische Kommune*, p. 265.

22. Cf. Pipes, *Struve*, pp. 95f. R. Rosdolsky, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des marxschen 'Kapital'* (Frankfurt, 1969), Band II, pp. 544f. Krause, *Marx und Engels*, pp. 113f.

23. Marx and Engels, *Werke*, 38, p. 469.

24. Cited in S.H. Baron, *Plekhanov* (Stanford, 1963), p. 100.

25. Cf. Mendel, *Dilemmas*, pp. 227f.

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political meaning once it was removed from the immediate Russian context. The populists singled out and elaborated on the insurmountable obstacle of a limited home market; or in other words, the continuing contradiction of underconsumption (by the home market) and overproduction. Implicitly they were working out a crisis theory of capitalism.

The reverse is true for the Marxist counter-argument. Against the populists they responded, in part, that capitalism solves the market problem; the limited internal market is overcome by capital itself. Capitalism creates its own home markets. By this economic analysis the Marxists saw themselves as proving the inevitability of capitalism in Russia, even without foreign markets. Politically this economic logic justified a shift away from populist activity with the peasantry to the urban proletariat. Yet outside its Russian context, insofar as the Marxists were minimizing the market antagonism, they were simultaneously working out a theory of a crisis-free capitalism. This must be immediately qualified: the legal Marxists did work out a theory of the crisis—to be discussed below—though it remains in dispute whether it is more in name than in fact. In any case the thrust of their analysis was to rebut the populists who were emphatic on the crisis which was intrinsic to capitalism. Hence a configuration of politics and economics emerged in which the Marxists were arguing for the ability of capitalism to subsist and persist, while the populists argued the reverse.

There were both simpler and more technical versions of the legal populist argument. Vorontsov reiterated an idea that was known to Sismondi and other earlier theorists and critics of capitalism. Insofar as the workers were paid less than they produce, a surplus was created which had to be sold and consumed; since the workers could not buy it all back, nor could the capitalists themselves consume all, periodically a crisis of overproduction would occur. "Every worker produces more than he himself can consume, and all these surplus items accumulate in a few hands; their owners themselves consume them... Yet eat, drink and dance as much as they like—they will not be able to squander the whole of the surplus value... Since there is no one inside the country on whom the capitalist could foist this remnant, it must be exported abroad, and that is why foreign markets are indispensable to countries embarking on the capitalist venture."[26] This analysis, again, is coupled to the idea that exactly this foreign market is precluded to Russia.

Danielson followed similar lines; he quoted *Capital* to the effect that these same workers cannot form the entire market for the goods they produce. As he wrote to Engels, "A capitalist country resolves this contradiction...through the extension of its foreign markets. But how can we escape this contradiction? Just as a factory cannot be envisioned whose products are exclusively intended for its own employed workers, so it is

26. Cited in R. Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital* (New York, 1968), p. 278.

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impossible for a capitalist country to exist without foreign markets."[27] Or, he wrote, "The capitalist could not exist for a day if his market was restricted to his own needs and his own workers."[28]

The response of the Marxists to the legal populists followed a number of directions; one was the factual argument that capitalism was in fact developing in Russia, and the *mir* decaying regardless of what the populists hoped or theorized about the nature of capitalist development. Lenin's first book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1899) presented statistical evidence to bolster the view that commodity and capitalist production was everywhere, in rurual and urban Russia, on the rise. "The facts quite clearly show that the main trend of small commodity production is towards the development of capitalism, in particular, towards the rise of manufacture; and manufacture is growing with enormous rapidity before our very eyes into large-scale machine industry."[29] The other argument drew upon the factual evidence, but was more concerned with the theoretical questions on the relationships of production to internal and external markets, underconsumption, accumulation, etc.

The bulk of this argument was advanced by S. Bulgakov, M. Tugan-Baranowsky, Lenin, and P. Struve; in this there was both a 'united front'[30] among the Marxists against the legal populists, as well as internal differences, especially between Lenin and the others. (The others were known as the legal Marxists, though Lenin also in the period was operating and publishing within the confines of the legal order.)[31] There was a general consensus that capitalism creates its own markets and own consumption. As Struve wrote, "If the example of the North American Union stands for anything, it is proof of the fact that under certain circumstances capitalist industry can attain a very high level of development almost entirely on the basis of the home market."[32]

The arguments of Bulgakov, Tugan-Baranowsky, and Lenin were more sophisticated; they focus on the disproportionate, though not exactly antagonistic, relationship between production and consumption. They claimed that production, not consumption, was the goal of capitalism, and consumption was dependent on production, not the reverse. The Russian populist literature, Bulgakov wrote, "frequently points out that in view of diminishing consumption a considerable increase of capitalist production is impossible without external markets, but this is due to a wrong evaluation of the part played by consumption in a capitalist society, the failure to

27. Cited in Rosdolsky, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte*, p. 543.
28. Nicolai-on (Danielson), *Die Volkswirtschaft in Russland nach der Bauern-Emancipation* (München, 1899), p. 259.
29. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia," *Collected Works*, 3 (Moscow, 1964), pp. 541-542.
30. See Pipes, *Struve*, part II.
31. J.L.H. Keep, *The Rise of Social Democracy in Russia* (Oxford, 1963), p. 37.
32. Luxemburg, *Accumulation*, p. 293.

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appreciate that consumption is not the ultimate end of capitalist production. Capitalist production does not exist by the grace of an increase in consumption but because of an extension of the outlying fields of production which in fact constitute the market for capitalist products." [33]

It was at this point that a discussion concerned at first with the viability of capitalism in Russia, and the importance of a proletariat versus the peasants of the *mir* was turning into one about the possibility of crisis and breakdown within capitalism per se. The argument that the legal Marxists defended, that capitalism produced its own markets and consumption, was indirectly, and later directly, confessing that capitalism was immune to crises emanating from underconsumption and dearth of markets. Note that this was not at first at issue, but this would be the logic of the economic analysis. What Luxemburg commented about these debates later was accurate: "There can be no doubt that the 'legalist' Russian Marxists achieved a victory over their opponents, the 'populists;' but this victory was rather too thorough. In the heat of battle, all three—Struve, Bulgakov, and Tugan-Baranowsky—overstated their case. The question was whether capitalism in general, and Russian capitalism in particular, is capable of development; these Marxists, however, proved this capacity to the extent of even offering theoretical proof that capitalism can go on forever." [34]

Some of Tugan-Baranowsky's formulations became famous, since he carried the reasoning to its complete conclusion: capitalism produced its own market. This market was brought into being by the need for goods by expanded production itself, which was sufficient to absorb all surplus. Hence there could be no problem of a limited market, either external or internal. In this scheme the role of the consumption by the workers themselves, which to the populists had clear boundaries, became not only secondary but irrelevant. "Despite an absolute decrease in social consumption, capital finds no difficulty in realizing an ever expanding mass of products. The expansion of production—the productive consumption of the means of production—takes the place of human consumers..." [35] And the famous conclusion: "Even if all workers were replaced by machinery except for one worker, this single worker would be able to put into motion the vast mass of machinery, and with its help create new machines—and means of consumption... The working class could disappear; this would not disturb in the least the self-expansion of capital." [36]

Lenin's writings of these years converged with that of the legal Marxists, but to a point was also a critique or a correction of some of their exaggerations. In this latter case, one finds, at least in outline, the development of an alternative notion of a crisis. One of Lenin's very first writings, "On

33. *Ibid.*, p. 304.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 324.
35. M. Tugan-Baranowsky, *Theoretische Grundlagen des Marxismus* (Leipzig, 1905), p. 227.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 230.

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the so-called Market Question" (1893) presented both the legal Marxist position, as well as a qualification of it. "The absence of a market is one of the principle arguments invoked against the possibility of applying the theory of Marx to Russia."[37] Lenin sought to refute that notion and the faulty response to it. His point, in less technical terms, is that capitalism creates the social division of labor which itself forms a sufficient market: "...The concept 'market' is quite inseparable from the concept of the social division of labour... The market arises...to the extent that social division of labour and commodity production appear... Thus, the limits of the development of the market in capitalist society are set by the limits of the specialization of social labour. But this specialization by its very nature is as infinite as technical developments."[38] At this point Luxemburg would seem to be correct; the market for capitalism was created by the social division of labor which itself was dependent on technical requirements. If this technical development was "infinite" then it would seem so was the market created by it. A crisis, at least one derived from the contradiction of production and consumption, seemed to be precluded.

The more technical responses of the legal Marxists and Lenin to the populists revolved around two components of Marx's theory, the reproduction schemes of volume II of *Capital* and the organic composition of capital. Marx's reproduction schemes aimed at elucidating a different structure of capitalist society than the focus of *Capital* volume I. In *Capital I* the type of commodity—aside from labor—is generally irrelevant; it could be corn or machines. What is important is its nature as a commodity. This is an approach which is adequate to illuminate the capitalist-worker relationship that is identical regardless of what sort of commodity is produced, sold, etc. But if one wants to shift levels and study the movements of the total social capital of which "individual capitals form only fractional parts" then another kind of abstraction is necessary.[39]

At this level of analysis it is necessary to include the *concrete form* of the commodity; for the total social capital it is evidently not irrelevant if, say, only bread was produced or only clothes. Any of these could function as examples of commodity production if one was considering commodity production apart from the social and total capital; but to explore this total capital it is imperative to include the concrete form of the commodity, since for the reproduction of the total social capital not any commodity will do, but specific types and kinds are necessary. In other words what must be included in the analysis is not only the "exchange value" but also the "use value:" the specific kind of commodity. As Marx wrote, so long as the analysis stayed on the level of individual capital "the bodily form of the commodities produced was wholly immaterial for the analysis, whether it

37. Lenin, "On the So-Called Market Question," *Collected Works*, I, p. 79.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.
39. Marx, *Capital*, II (Moscow, 1971), p. 392.

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was machines, for instance, corn or looking glasses... This merely formal manner of presentation is no longer adequate in the study of the total social capital." The movement of the total capital "is not only a replacement of value, but also a replacement in material and is therefore as much bound up with the relative proportions of the value components of the total social product as with their use value...."[40]

The reproduction schemes, then, take up this project of the movement of the total social capital which includes its concrete form. In addition to the value analysis Marx divided the total production into two departments which broadly reflect two types of bodily forms of commodities: Department I in which means of production are produced, that is, commodities whose concrete shape dictates that they can only pass into further production, e.g., factory machinery; Department II or commodities which can pass into individual consumption, by individual workers or capitalists. Marx then worked out the relationship between these two departments if production is to proceed, first without any accumulation (simple reproduction) and then with accumulation (extended accumulation). These reproduction schemes served as the perfect response of the legal Marxists to the legal populists; they seemed to establish that capitalism could reproduce itself without any external markets, solely by maintaining certain internal proportions between the two departments. Moreover in combination with the concept of the increasing organic composition of capital, the question of limited consumption seemed to be solved.

The organic composition of capital was developed in *Capital I*, though its connection to falling rate of profit was only worked out in *Capital III*. In brief the organic composition of capital expressed a dual relation of the total capital, a value and material relation. As a value relation, capital is divided into constant capital (c) or the money outlay for machinery and variable capital (v) or the money outlay for labor-power. The non-value or material analysis in which there is a "strict correlation" to the value division separated capital into the mass of the means of production and the mass of labor employed. In the progress of capital considered as a ratio there is an increase in constant capital as compared to the variable; exactly this is the definition of productivity: less labor sets more machinery in motion; or 'c' increases in relation to 'v'. This is the "law of the progressive increase in constant capital."[41]

The reproduction schemes do not take this 'law' into account. More exactly: they ignore it as a variable, and it is by no means clear that a changing composition of capital can be introduced into the schemes without undermining what limited validity they might possess.[42] But if it is

40. *Ibid.*, p. 394.
41. Marx, *Capital*, I (Moscow, 1971), p. 612.
42. Rosdolsky, for one, holds that the organic composition cannot be introduced into the reproduction schemes, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte*, pp. 560f.

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introduced all the problems of underconsumption, lack of markets, etc., are resolved. The 'surplus' is simply plowed into Department I which presumably with a higher organic composition is increasing faster than Department II. Hence Lenin noted that the reproduction "scheme does not take technicasl progress into consideration. As Marx proved in volume I of *Capital technical* progress is expressed by the gradual decrease of the ration of variable capital to constant capital (v/c), whereas in the scheme it is taken as unchanged. It goes without saying that if this change is made in the scheme there will be a relatively more rapid increase in means of production than in articles of consumption."[43]

Yet the crisis-free conclusion was not embraced by Lenin; rather he disassociated himself from the more extreme formulations of this position maintaining à la Tugan-Baranowsky that personal and individual consumption was never a problem, and that there was no contradiction between consumption and production. "Of course it is wrong to speak of accumulation being 'independent' of the production of articles of consumption..." The contradiction of consumption and production persists; the increased development of the means of production "merely sets the...contradiction aside, but does not abolish it."[44]

In a series of articles and his book, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, Lenin expanded on points set forth in "On the So-called Market Question." For purposes here the following positions of Lenin are important:

1) Complete rejection of the theory that capitalism necessitates an external market or so-called 'third' person in order to develop. In this he differed not only from the populists, but from its qualified acceptance by Struve. Struve theorized that "surplus value cannot be realized from consumption either by the capitalist or by the workers, but presumes consumption by third persons."[45] This populist notion ignored the crucial category of the means of production. "Once...attention is paid to the circumstances that in capitalist society an enormous and ever-growing part is played by the means of production (the part of the social product that is used for productive and not personal consumption, not for consumption by people but by capital)," the theory of Struve collapses.[46]

2) Rejection of obverse view that capitalism was totally independent of consumption, as most forcefully expressed by Tugan-Baranowsky. While Lenin along with the Legal Marxists advanced the view that capitalism created its own markets, and for that reason could not suffer from underconsumption, he did not share the view that personal consumption played no part in accumulation. "For capitalism, therefore, the growth of

43. Lenin, *Collected Works*, I, p. 85.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 84, 106.
45. Lenin, "Economic Content of Narodnism," *Collected Works*, I, p. 497.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 498.

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the home market is to a certain extent 'independent' of the growth of personal consumption, and takes place mostly on account of productive consumption. But it would be a mistake to understand this 'independence' as meaning that productive consumption is entirely divorced from personal consumption: the former can and must increase faster than the latter (and there its 'independence' ends)...but it goes without saying that in the last analysis, productive consumption is always bound up with personal consumption."[47] And in direct refutation of Tugan-Baranowsky: though Department I must develop more rapidly than Department II "it does not follow from this that the production of the means of production can develop *in complete independence* of the production of articles of consumption and *outside of all connection with it*."[48]

3) Crises founded on the anarchy of production. Lenin did not develop a full crisis theory these years—nor later—but he cannot be simply faulted with the failure of the legal Marxists that Luxemburg indicated: proving the permanent stability of capitalism. Rather Lenin sought to show that there remained a recurring antagonism between production and personal consumption which was more basically grounded in the anarchy of production. Lenin observed that there are two theories of crises, the first advanced by the populists. "The first theory explains crises by the contradiction between production and consumption by the working class; the second explains them by the contradiction between the social character or production and the private character of appropriation. Consequently, the former sees the root of the phenomenon *outside* of production...the latter sees it precisely in the conditions of production." "To put it more briefly, the former explains crises by underconsumption, the latter by the anarchy of production."[49] The latter does not deny the former, but traces it to a more profound level. Hence Lenin continued to write of the contradiction between production and consumption: "the contradiction between the tendency towards the *unlimited* expansion of production and the inevitability of limited consumption."[50] Somewhat later Lenin commented on Plekhanov's statement: "...the sale of commodities necessarily lags behind their production, and this periodically causes more or less severe industrial crises..." Lenin corrected: "The basic cause of crises: *Planslosigkeit* [planlessness], private appropriation under social production..."[51]

The notion of the crisis developed here would seem to stand in direct contradiction to the theory of the legal Marxists. Crises, wrote Lenin, are "inevitable."[52] Yet there is more than a passing affinity. As mentioned

47. Lenin, "Development of Capitalism in Russia," *Collected Works,* III, p. 55.
48. Lenin, "A Note on the Question of the Market Theory," *Collected Works,* IV, p. 59.
49. Lenin, "A Characteristic of Economic Romanticism," *Collected Works,* II, p. 167.
50. Lenin, "A Note on the Question of the Market Theory," *Collected Works,* IV, p. 58.
51. Lenin, "Notes on Plekhanov's First Draft Programme," *Collected Works,* V, pp. 21-22.
52. Lenin, "The Lessons of the Crisis," *Collected Works,* V, p. 89.

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previously, while rejecting the crisis theory of the populists, the legal Marxists presupposed and worked-out a qualified crisis theory. Against the populists they stressed the viability of capitalism; and the reproduction schemes seemed to confirm the ability of capitalism to expand without crises. If the proper relationships were maintained between departments, no crises would emerge. But exactly this was also the reason a crisis could emerge: if the proper relations were not maintained, a crisis would occur, a crisis of disproportions. Because of the complexity and interdependence of all sections of the capitalist market, and its essential anarchy, such disproportions would be a regular event. Tugan-Baranowsky wrote: "With a proportional division of social production, the demand will be produced through the production of commodities themselves. However, the achievement of a perfect proportionality includes insurmountable difficulties. Each division of the social capital outside a proportional one will lead to over-production of some wares; but since all sections of production stand in a close relationship, a partial over-production of some wares is transformed simply into a general over-production."[53] While rejecting the exaggerations of the legal Marxists, Lenin's position at this period was cut from the same cloth: the source of the crises is the anarchy of the market.[54]

The politics of this crisis theory was generated by the economic logic—with Tugan-Baranowsky and later theorists, such as Hilferding. Insofar as planlessness seemed to be the root cause of the disproportions, the inference is that with planning the crises could be avoided; that is, without a fundamental change, but government direction. Combatting the notion that underconsumption causes crises, Tugan-Baranowsky stated "...Capitalist production creates for itself a market... If social production was planfully organized, if the leaders of production had a complete knowledge of demand and the market, and could shift workers and capital freely out of one sector of production to another, so, no matter how low social consumption might be, the supply of commodities would not overstep the demand. But the accumulation of capital that is dominated by a total planlessness of social production, by the anarchy of the world market, leads unavoidably to crises."[55] The apparently close link between the economic analysis—anarchy of the market—and the political conclusion—planning and statism—was the one reason why left communists would seek to ground

53. Tugan-Baranowsky, *Studien zur Theorie und Geschichte der Handelskrisen*, p. 31.

54. Rosdolsky considers that Lenin and the legal Marxists essentially shared the same position; see *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte*, p. 567. Rabehl argues that Lenin differed from the legal Marxists in all decisive points; see B. Rabehl, "Zur Methode der revolutionären Realpolitik des Leninismus," in *Lenin. Revolution und Politik* (Frankfurt, 1970), pp. 62f. Cf. Bukharin, *Imperialism and the Accumulation of Capital*, ed. K.J. Tarbuck (New York, 1972), p. 225.

55. Tugan-Baranowsky, *Studien*, p. 33. "Tugan-Baranowsky ascribes the cyclical character of capitalist economy above all to its lack of planning. The replacement of an anarchist economy by a planned one would set aside its cyclical character:" N. Moszkowska, *Das marxsche System* (Berlin, 1929), p. 154.

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a crisis theory on another foundation.

II

That the legal Marxists evolved away from Marxism to liberalism (Struve), ethical socialism and idealism (Tugan-Baranowsky), and religion (Bulgakov) suggests the nature of the political dimension of their economic analysis.[56] The economic argument that capitalism would and could develop in Russia minimized the obstacles, crises, and contradictions that impeded its existence. The logic of economic inevitability generated a political logic: acceptance of the capitalist reality. That this was not at first their intention suggests the tension contained in a Marxist political economy. In the long run the economic logic asserted itself despite and against the initial political project.

The nexus of economics and politics as it was played out in Western Europe was more complex than in Russia, and more illuminating. Here, the German debate can be considered briefly as a prologue to Luxemburg, Grossmann and left communism. The main contours of the debate differed from the Russian, a difference due to the European socio-economic structure which presented different theoretical problems. Evidently in Europe there was no need to prove that capitalism could in the future develop. Hence the laws of accumulation and the reproduction schemes of *Capital II* were generally ignored. Tugan-Baranowsky observed in 1901 that in contrast to Russia in Germany there was "no attempt to evaluate the Marxist analysis of reproduction of social capital as an explanation of crises and, in general, of the laws of development of capitalism."[57]

A consensus existed in Europe that crises were integral to capitalism though little energy was expended in proving this—a general consensus, that is, among the orthodox. The crisis theory in Western Europe cannot be abstracted from the orthodoxy-revisionism dispute. A simplified schema might correlate the orthodox defending the theory of the crisis and the revisionists denying it. But this only begins the story; inasmuch as neither exponents or opponents differed on decisive political questions it is a major problem then and now, to dig out the 'inner' relationship between orthodox and revisionists, façade notwithstanding.[58] On a specific issue, such as the mass strike, Luxemburg observed the almost "literal agreement" between

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56. For some details, see B. Wielenga, *Lenins Weg zur Revolution. Eine Konfrontation mit Sergej Bulgakov und Petr Struve*)München, 1971), and Mendel, *Dilemmas*, pp. 165f.

57. Tugan-Baranowsky, *Studien*, p. 199.

58. Some of the works this analysis draws upon and follows are: V. Lidtke, *The Outlawed Party: Social Democracy in Germany* (Princeton, 1966); H.H. Steinberg, *Sozialismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie* (Hanover, 1967); E. Rikli, *Der Revisionismus* (Zürich, 1936); S. Miller, *Das Problem der Freiheit im Sozialismus* (Frankfurt, 1964); A.J. Berlau, *German Social Democratic Party* (New York, 1959); G. Gneuss, "Um den Einklang von Theorie und Praxis," in *Marxismusstudien*, Zweite Folge (Tübingen, 1957); E. Matthias, "Kautsky und Kautskyanismus," *ibid.*; P. Gay, *Dilemma of Democratic Socialism* (New York, 1962); C. Schorske, *German Social Democracy* (New York, 1965).

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orthodox and revisionist, that is, both Kautsky and Bernstein opposed it.[59] From this perspective the politics of the revisionists could be valued for at least expressing the truth about the reformist core of German Social Democracy, which was veiled by the orthodox with revolutionary slogans. For exactly this reason Sorel praised Bernstein's revisionism; he at least wanted to make "the language of Socialism accord with the real facts" while Kautsky sought to "veil" the "real activity of the Socialist Party."[60] Lukács made the same point: Bernstein was "frank" while Kautsky's role was to "blur theoretically the decisive problems of revolution" on behalf of party unity.[61]

Most accounts of German Social Democracy have sought to explain the sham conflict and the real unity between the orthodox and the revisionists. The orthodoxy, according to several interpretations, was simply a series of theoretical propositions aimed at welding the party into a unified force; it functioned as an ideology of integration in which the content of specific propositions was more or less irrelevant.[62] The Erfurt Program, the acceptance of Marxism by the German Social Democrats, sanctified the chasm between the orthodox theory and the practical-reformism. The first part of the program dealt with increasing contradictions—"the antagonism between exploiter and exploited grows ever more glaring"—while the second part with practical demands.[63] The resulting split is papered-over by an evolutionary schema that presents revolution as inevitable—and distant and gradual.[64] Kautsky, it should be recalled, except for a brief period, was always an eager proponent of the Darwin-Marx parallel.[65]

The upshot of this is that on the issues that divided the populists and Marxists in Russia, the necessity of a crisis due to overproduction and limited markets was not a major concern; from a Russian perspective it appeared that the Germans were unified on the issue. Tugan-Baranowsky remarked that in Germany both the orthodox and revisionists agree on the "possibility of chronic over-production as a result of the limited possibilities for expansion by the capitalist market." " 'Revisionist' and 'Orthodox' are united on this point."[66] Tugan himself, of course, disputed this: the notion of "inevitable breakdown of capitalist economy as a result of decreasing markets" is "an article of belief not only of the 'orthodox' Marxists but...

59. Luxemburg, "Ermattung oder Kampf?" in *Die Massenstreikdebatte*, ed. A. Grunenberg (Frankfurt, 1970), p. 137. See J.P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg* (London, 1966), vol. 2, pp. 415f.

60. Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (New York, 1961), p. 214.

61. Lukács, "Bernstein's Triumph," in his *Political Writings* (London, 1972), pp. 127-133.

62. W. Abendroth, "Das Problem der Beziehungen zwischen politischer Theorie und politischer Praxis," *Die neue Gesellschaft*, V, 6 (1958), pp. 466f and K. Brockschmidt, *Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie bis zum des Sozialistengesetzes* (Stuttgart, 1929), pp. 102f.

63. The text is in Miller, *Das Problem der Freiheit*, pp. 310f.

64. See the analysis of *Die neue Zeit*, the theoretical organ of the Social Democrats, in Lidtke, *The Outlawed Party*, p. 280.

65. H.H. Steinberg, *Sozialismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie*, p. 52. Steinberg's is one of the most provocative analyses; he corrects Matthias in some respects.

66. Tugan-Baranowsky, *Theoretische Grundlagen*, p. 216.

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also many 'Revisionists' " and has been "proved...to be a fantasy."[67]

Tugan-Baranowsky overstated the agreement, for neither the orthodox nor the revisionists in Germany were much concerned with developing a crisis/breakdown theory; and some revisionists, of course, sought to refute it. C. Schmidt's discussion of the crisis (1901), in a review of Tugan-Baranowsky, accepted in only an extremely qualified manner the notion of a crisis.[68] Against Tugan-Baranowsky he argued for the crisis potential of underconsumption; he noted that the whole subject is laden with political meaning. "Whoever writes on the crisis and considers it more than a collection of facts, must at the same time *vis-à-vis* capitalism lay his cards on the table."[69] Hence the dispute is "less academic than it seems." If Tugan-Baranowsky is correct, it is not clear why capitalism must bury itself. But Schmidt was very cautious, and refused to make any predictions which depended on unknowns; and moreover he suggested that optimism—a belief in no crises and increasingly better conditions for the proletariat—was more constructive than pessimism.[70]

Other contributions to a crisis theory were even more indefinite. H. Cunow in "Zur Zusammenbruchstheorie" did, in taking up Bernstein, make a very qualified, and hardly developed, case for a breakdown. "Whether our economic development in its real tendencies is driving towards a general catastrophe is the essence of the whole question." Cunow considered crises as the result of diminished markets, and was not willing to rule them out because they might be undesirable.[71] Kautsky in his 1899 critique of Bernstein was perhaps most accurate; he claimed that Bernstein raised a false issue with his attack on the breakdown theory, as in fact there was none. "A definite 'breakdown theory' was not created by Marx and Engels. The word stems from Bernstein..." And further: "In the official publications of the German Social Democracy Bernstein could search in vain for an assertion which runs in some way similar to the alleged 'breakdown' theory. In the passage in the Erfurt program which discusses crises, there is no word on breakdown."[72]

Kautsky's crisis articles from 1901-02, a critique of Tugan-Baranowsky, if more emphatic than his Bernstein critique on the necessity for a crisis, is indefinite about its nature. Against the disproportion theory of Tugan-Baranowsky, Kautsky argued for a multi-causation—with a large place for underconsumption. The reason for the "constant press towards

67. *Ibid.*, p. 228.

68. See the discussion in P. Sweezy, *Theory of Capitalist Development* (New York, 1968), pp. 96-97.

69. C. Schmidt, "Zur Theorie der Handelskrisen und der Ueberproduktion," *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, V (1901), p. 670.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 676.

71. H. Cunow, "Zur Zusammenbruchstheorie," *Die neue Zeit*, XVII (1898-99), p. 430.

72. K. Kautsky, *Bernstein und das sozialdemokratische Programm. Eine Antikritik* (Stuttgart, 1899), pp. 42, 43.

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overproduction" is that the exploiters themselves cannot consume enough of what remains after the underconsumption by the workers."[73] The long term prospects are "crises, wars, and catastrophes." Kautsky broaches the political dimension; what is the "practical value" of this dispute, he asks. The revisionists attack the crisis theory because it infers an intensification of class struggle. "It is no accident that revisionists have especially fought the Marxist crisis theory." The prospects, rather, are for "chronic depression" which precludes class collaboration. "Our theory of the crises is incompatible with the position of weakening of the class conflict."[74]

If orthodox German Social Democracy was only lukewarm about breakdown theories, the revisionists were opposed.[75] Most notably, of course, is Bernstein in the later 1890s; but already at the time of the Erfurt program G. von Vollmar, an ardent reformist, had taken issue with the idea that history moves by leaps and jumps; rather it moves 'organically;' hence the party should concentrate on the immediate and most pressing goals.[76] But it is only with Bernstein that a full-scale critique of a breakdown theory is advanced, a critique which received widest circulation in his *Die Voraussetzung des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozialdemokratie.*[77] "I set myself against the notion that we have to expect shortly a collapse of the bourgeois economy..." "...The task of social democracy is, instead of speculating on a great economic crash...to fight for all reforms..."[78] Bernstein suggested that the extension of world trade, modern credit system, and industrial cartels have rendered crises impossible. "There is no urgent reason for concluding that such a crisis will come to pass for purely economic reasons."[79]

Yet there was no real conflict of interpretations between revisionists and orthodox. Firstly, the revisionists, most studies suggest, formed the essential nucleus of not only the trade unions, but the Social Democracy itself. That this was not immediately evident may be partly explained by the distinction drawn between revisionism and reformism: revisionism can be considered the theoretical expression of practical reformism. The reformists themselves

73. K. Kautsky, "Krisentheorie," *Die neue Zeit*, XX (1901-02), p. 80.

74. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-143.

75. The following illustrates how unimportant the crisis theory was even to the orthodox: Bernstein's critique of the crisis was spurred by a resolution of the London Congress of the Second International that stated only: "The economic and industrial development is going on with such rapidity that a crisis may occur within a comparatively short time. The congress therefore impresses upon the proletariat of all countries the imperative necessity for learning... how to administer the business of their respective countries..." According to Bernstein what was envisioned here was not a "regular crisis" "but a real world historical crisis, a crash not of so-and-so many capitalist enterprises, but of the entire capitalist economy in general," E. Bernstein, "Zusammenbruchstheorie und Colonialpolitik" (1898), in Bernstein, *Zur Geschichte und Theorie des Sozialismus* (Berlin, 1901), pp. 221-222.

76. See Miller, *Das Problem der Freiheit*, p. 215.

77. See Gay, *Dilemma* and P. Angel, *Eduard Bernstein et l'évolution du socialisme allemand* (Paris, 1961), pp. 224f.

78. E. Bernstein, *Evolutionary Socialism* (New York, 1961), pp. xxiv, xxvii.

79. *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 93.

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generally and successfully shunned revisionism because it jeopardized their activities by drawing attention to them. They preferred non-theoretical pragmatism. "Since Erfurt," wrote von Vollmar to Bernstein, "I speak less and act more. . . I can say that I am completely satisfied with the results."[80]

Secondly, no fully developed crisis theory was worked out to refute and discuss. The most sophisticated economic work of the period, Hilferding's *Das Finanzkapital* (1909-10) was only partially concerned with a crisis theory; and what there was of a crisis theory in Hilferding drew upon Tugan-Baranowsky and disproportionality. ". . . These schemes show that in capitalist production reproduction on simple as well as extended levels can proceed undisturbed, if only these proportions are retained. Obversely, crises can enter, even in simple reproduction, with a disturbance in the proportions."[81] Chiefly, his book analyzed the transformation from an economy competitive and anarchistic to one controlled and dominated by cartels, banks, and monopolies; these, Hilferding stated, do not set aside the anarchy of the market but raise it to a higher form; but insofar as cartels are defined as conscious regulation in an antagonistic form, Hilferding raised questions similar to Tugan-Baranowsky. "In itself it is imaginable that a general cartel controls the entire production and with that, sets aside crises," though for "social and political" reasons—not economic—this is not possible.[82]

Again, one can note how the economic logic generated a political one; the crisis was a byproduct of the anarchy of the market which could be controlled by planning, either corporate or state. Later, Hilferding introduced the concept of "organized capitalism" which is contrasted to an earlier and more anarchistic capitalism.[83] Insofar as production is socialized, albeit in a capitalist form, it was that much closer to a socialist society. The conclusion that seemed to flow from this is the necessity to work for legal and state control of the economy through peaceful and parliamentary means. "I have always been one of those," Hilferding stated in a 1927 party conference, "who rejected the theory of the economic breakdown. . ."[84] His position, rather, is that we find ourselves in an "era in which free competition—capitalism purely dominated by the power of the blind laws of the market—is surpassed; and we come to a capitalist organization of the economy." The upshot: "Organized capitalism means in reality the replacement of the capitalist principle of free competition by the socialist principle of planful production."[85] This, in turn, changes for the

80. Cited in and see the discussion in Steinberg, *Sozialismus*, p. 110.
81. R. Hilferding, *Das Finanzkapital* (Frankfurt, 1968), p. 347.
82. *Ibid.*, pp. 402-403.
83. See the discussion in W. Gottschalch, *Strukturveränderungen der Gesellschaft und politisches Handeln in der Lehre von Rudolf Hilferding* (Berlin, 1962), pp. 189f.
84. R. Hilferding, "Die Aufgabe der Sozialdemokratie in der Republik," *Protokoll Sozialdemokratie Parteitag Kiel 1927* (Berlin, 1927), Raubdruck, p. 165.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 168.

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better the possibility of conscious control of the economy, and the relationship of Social Democracy to the state; now "Social Democracy is part of the state."[86]

A quick glance backward: In Russia the disproportionality theory served, for a time, as an argument for a proletarian and Marxist politics—against a romantic focus on peasant socialism. But both in Russia and Western Europe the political logic of the economic analysis asserted itself. The emphasis on crises emanating from economic disproportions—not contradictions—carried with it an inverse political logic: the end of crises due to state planning. The economic theory of disproportions seemed to issue into political reformism. The only decisive crisis theory remained the monopoly of the legal populists; and it is not surprising that when Rosa Luxemburg worked out the first real crisis theory in the West she reached back to them.

III

With Luxemburg politics and economics, subjectivity and objectivity, receive a new and provocative form that continues to haunt Marxism. Luxemburg, of course, is associated with a distinct politics; sympathetic to spontaneous and democratic political action, critical of organizational fetishes—Kautsky's or the Bolshevik's—she championed a revolutionary perspective. At the same time she sought to ground her 'activist' politics in an objective and economic analysis. Both these moments, her objective economic analysis of accumulation and breakdown, and her politics, stood in uncertain relation to each other. Few followed her in defending the relationship she set between both of them.

Beginning with her critique of Bernstein, Luxemburg advanced the notion that revolutionary politics was inseparable from a breakdown of capital. "...If one admits with Bernstein that capitalist development does not move in the direction of its own ruin, then socialism ceases to be objectively necessary." "He does not merely reject a certain form of the collapse. He rejects the very possibility of a collapse."[87] "Bernstein began his revision of the Social Democracy by abandoning the theory of capitalist collapse. The latter, however, is the corner-stone of scientific socialism."[88]

With Luxemburg's *Accumulation of Capital* (1913) and her *Anti-Critique* (written 1915, published 1921) the full complexities of the politics of the crisis theory are expressed. According to Luxemburg herself she was taken by surprise at the direct link her critics made between her abstract economic writings—the 'pure' science of the *Accumulation of Capital* and political praxis; she noted in the *Anti-Critique* that the storm of criticism her book stimulated was "all the more astonishing since the criticized book is purely

86. *Ibid.*, p. 181. Cf. R. Schimkowsky, "Exkurs über Hilferding," in *Monopol und Staat*, ed. R. Ebbinghausen (Frankfurt, 1974).
87. R. Luxemburg, *Reform or Revolution?* (Ceylon, 1966), p. 11.
88. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

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theoretical and strictly objective, and directed against no living Marxist... A quite unique and somehow funny event—a purely theoretical study on an abstract scientific problem was censured by the entire staff of a political daily paper..." "All these events clearly indicate that there have been other passions touched upon, one way or another, than 'pure' science..."[89]

Before exploring these political passions what, in very abridged formulation, were the 'pure' economic contributions of Luxemburg? First, crudely, Luxemburg returned to the economics of the legal populists; she denied the ability of capitalism to accumulate without an outside market; or she affirmed that capitalism is plagued by underconsumption, that is, by a lack of markets; for that reason it must find an outside market. As with the Russian debates, the reproduction schemes are the focus. Luxemburg does not skirt the issue: because the reproduction schemes seem to support the legal Marxists, and the theory of disproportionality, she attacks them directly, and finds them wanting. According to Luxemburg, these schemes suffer from a lethal defect of abstraction. The diagrams create a closed and unreal system. From the schemes, Department I increases production so as to provide more good to Department II so then Department II can increase its consumer goods. "Well, then, who requires these additional consumer goods? Department I, of course—replies the diagram—because it now employs a greater number of workers. We are plainly running in circles. From the capitalist point of view it is absurd to produce more consumer goods merely in order to maintain more workers, and to turn out more means of production merely to keep his surplus of workers occupied."[90] The real reason is that there must be someone outside the capitalist-worker relationship—and outside the diagram—who buys the increased goods, a 'third' person, or outside market.

Not only do the diagrams exclude the outside consumer, but in excluding this they preclude the crisis due to the antagonism of production and consumption. "...Marx's diagram of accumulation does not solve the question of who is to benefit in the end by enlarged reproduction. If we take the diagram literally...it appears that capitalist production would itself realize its entire surplus value..." The scheme sets up an *ad infinitum* process. "We are running in circles, quite in accordance with the theory of Tugan-Baranowsky." "The diagram does indeed permit of crises, but only because of a lack of proportions within production... It precludes, however, the deep and fundamental antagonism between the capacity to consume and the capacity to produce in a capitalist society..." What is omitted from the abstract schemes is irreplaceable in the real world: the

89. R. Luxemburg, *Accumulation of Capital—An Anti-Critique*, and N. Bukharin, *Imperialism and the Accumulation of Capital* (New York, 1972), pp. 47, 48. To distinguish this work of Luxemburg from the 'original,' *The Accumulation of Capital*, the former is usually designated simply as *Anti-Critique*.

90. R. Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital*, p. 132.

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outside market, the outlet for the surplus. "The workers and capitalist themselves cannot possibly realize that part of the surplus value which is to be capitalized. Therefore, the realization of the surplus value for the purposes of accumulation is an impossible task for a society which consists solely of workers and capitalists... It requires as its prime condition—that there should be strata of buyers outside capitalist society."[91]

Cast slightly differently this was the argument of the legal populists. Luxemburg was well aware of the prehistory of her analysis, labeling it various 'rounds' of an on-going controversy. Her own discussion of the legal populists was brief, conceding that the legal Marxists were superior in argument and reasoning. But, as cited earlier, the failure of the legal Marxists was that their victory was "too thorough;" they proved that accumulation and capitalism could proceed "forever." At this point the political content of her argument erupts. "If the capitalist mode of production can ensure boundless expansion of the productive forces of economic progress, it is invincible indeed. The most important objective argument in support of a social theory breaks down! Socialist political action and the ideological import of the proletarian class struggle cease to reflect economic events, and socialism no longer appears an historical necessity."[92]

Luxemburg takes the reverse tack: to show the historical necessity of socialism by proving the historical necessity of crisis and imperialism. Both of these—crises and imperialism—were inextricably bound together; both derived from the same economic fact about capitalism, the inability to accumulate in a 'pure' situation of capitalist and worker. Imperialism breaks out of the limited market, but permits accumulation only at the increasing risk of crises. As the non-capitalist milieu—the market—shrinks, capitalism approaches the state of crisis. If the non-capitalist market is absolutely irreplaceable for accumulation, the threat and fact of it dwindling drives capitalism to its downfall. "The more capitalist countries participate in this hunting for accumulation areas, the rarer the non-capitalist places still open to the expansion of capital becomes and the tougher the competition; its raids turn into a chain of economic and political catastrophes: world crises, wars, revolution."[93]

The abstract discussion on accumulation is loaded with political content; in Luxemburg's interpretation, the economic logic of capitalism demonstrates the necessity for imperialism and crises; and for this reason it argued for a definite political praxis—or did it? Luxemburg herself hedged: "Tactics and strategy in the practical struggle are not directly dependent on whether...one believes in the possibility of accumulation in an 'isolated' capitalist society or not, whether one interprets Marx's models of reproduction one way or the other." And then the big "but." "But there is the

91. *Ibid.*, pp. 330, 346-347, 450-451.
92. *Ibid.*, p. 325.
93. Luxemburg, *Anti-Critique*, p. 60.

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closest connection between the understanding and treatment of theoretical problems and the practice of political parties over long periods."[94]

The official Social Democratic position that accumulation is possible without an outside market denies the necessity of imperialism and crises; to Luxemburg this position "is the theoretical formula of a quite distinct tactical tendency." It considered imperialism "not as a historical necessity, as the decisive conflict for socialism, but as the wicked invention of a small group of people." From this it concluded that it is possible to compromise, teaching the bourgeoisie to moderate the imperialist contradictions. This in fact was the logic of Tugan-Baranowsky; first, he proved that capitalism could accumulate without an outside market, and then without crises. "What my 'expert' critics are holding against me now was said by Tugan-Baranowsky word for word..." Such economic logic transforms the proletarian party into a party of social reform.[95]

Two points to be reiterated: to Luxemburg herself the argument that capitalism was objectively destined to end in crises was an argument for an active and whole-scale political intervention. Secondly, if in the main her economic reasoning was that of the legal populists the political context differed; both theorized that a pure capitalism could not subsist or persist. Insofar as the required external markets were already divided up, the populists concluded that capitalism was blocked for Russia. Luxemburg's political thinking differed in kind. The markets for Western Europe already existed; even aside from the crucial question *when* these markets would dwindle, effectively choking capitalism, the thrust of *Accumulation of Capital* was a critique of imperialism and colonialism. From the same economic argument two different political conclusions were drawn.

If Luxemburg was accurate, the "political tendency" associated with each economic position would be relatively clear. The denial of market crises would be confined to the center and right Social Democrats, advocates of social reform, and its affirmation by the left. In fact the story is a bit more complicated; those who took exception to Luxemburg's economic analysis were not simply or solely the 'official' Social Democracy represented by Otto Bauer's response to her book. It included those from the left such as A. Pannekoek and Lenin. Pannekoek defended the validity of the reproduction schemes; correctly understood they presented no problem of markets. Yet Pannekoek did not endorse Tugan-Baranowsky's interpretation which eliminated any role for an external market. Rather the non-capitalist milieu plays a part, but not as Luxemburg claims, so as to "resolve the inner contradictions of expanded reproduction."[96]

94. *Ibid.*, p. 144.
95. *Ibid.*, pp. 78, 80-81.
96. A. Pannekoek, "Theoretisches zur Ursache der Krisen," *Die neue Zeit*, XXXI (1913), p. 786. Pannekoek's contemporary review of Luxemburg appeared in the *Bremer Bürger Zeitung*, which I have not been able to obtain.

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Not surprisingly, Lenin considered Luxemburg's theory a rerun of the old legal populist one. While the full-scale critique of her work which he intended to write did not materialize, he indicated in several passing comments his position. He wrote in a letter to the *Bremer Bürger-Zeitung* which published Pannekoek's review of Luxemburg: "It pleases me very much that you in the main point came to the same result that I 14 years ago defended against Tugan-Baranowsky and the 'populists,' namely that the realization of surplus value even in a 'pure' capitalist society is possible. I have not yet seen the book of Rosa L., but *theoretically* you are undoubtedly in this point correct."[97] In another letter: "I have read Rosa's new book... Horribly false interpretation! She has distorted Marx. I am very happy that Pannekoek, as well as Eckstein and O. Bauer have unanimously condemned it, and have brought up what I in 1899 had said against the Populists."[98] And finally in a bibliography appended to his essay "Karl Marx" he noted "On the question of the Marxist theory of the accumulation of capital there is a new work by Rosa Luxemburg, *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals* (Berlin, 1913) and an analysis of her incorrect interpretation by Otto Bauer... See also Eckstein and...Pannekoek."[99]

Lenin in these passing comments did not indicate any *political* failing due to Luxemburg's defective economic analysis, though later critics would link the two. Bukharin in 1924 published a critique of Luxemburg that can be considered the orthodox communist reply. His critique partly repeats what others have said, and can be summarized here: she 1) misunderstood the reproduction schemes and accumulation, 2) transformed overproduction and underconsumption into the only contradiction of capital, 3) shifted the contradiction from production itself to problems of realization—markets, consumption, etc., 4) misunderstood imperialism, which Bukharin, like Lenin, derived from the search for larger profits, finance capital, monopolies, etc.

The political dimension is disclosed in the discussion of the chronology of the collapse. According to Luxemburg, as capitalism "approaches the point where humanity only consists of capitalist and proletarians, further accumulation will become impossible"—the crisis will set in.[100] But, as Bukharin noted, capitalism per se only dominates a small portion of the globe. "...It is also a fact that *the overwhelming majority of the world's population belongs to the 'third persons'*."[101] "Given the existence of such a huge

97. Lenin, *Briefe II* (Berlin, 1967), pp. 152-153. German editions of Lenin are used in this and the following reference because I was unable to find the letters in question in corresponding English editions.

98. Lenin, "An die Redaktion des 'Sozial-Demokrat'," *Werke*, 35 (Berlin, 1963), p. 70.

99. Lenin, "Karl Marx," *Collected Works*, 21, p. 90. For an interesting discussion and comparison of Lenin's and Luxemburg's theory of imperialism see C. Pailloix, "Die Imperialismusfrage bei Lenin und Luxemburg," in S. Amin, C. Pailloix, *Neuere Beiträge zur Imperialismustheorie* (München, 1971).

100. Luxemburg, *Anti-Critique*, p. 60.

101. Luxemburg conceded this expressly elsewhere. "The capitalist mode of production has

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reservoir of 'third persons' which exists in reality, there can be practically no talk of a collapse. Then we could say...capitalist expansion still has such a colossal field of activity at its disposal in the form of the 'third persons' that only utopians can talk seriously about some kind of proletarian revolution." Such a conclusion "flows unavoidably from Rosa Luxemburg's theory. The fact that she draws completely opposite conclusions from all this merely proves her logical inconsistency.'[102] The objective theory of the collapse seemed to demonstrate the objective viability of capitalism.

This "logical inconsistency" was not the only "connection between Rosa Luxemburg's *theoretical* work and a number of her *practical-political* ones,"[103] that Bukharin drew, but it was for the problem of crisis and subjectivity the most important. Yet it could be noted that Bukharin's own formulations did not fare much better. Bukharin's general framework of mechanistic and evolutionary materialism has often been criticized;[104] even in his Luxemburg critique Bukharin defined the limits of capitalism by a "certain degree of the tension of capitalist contradictions."[105] Elsewhere, such as in *Imperialism and World Economy*, he set up a causal relationship; the emphasis is on the growth of state-capitalist trusts which lead to more and more ferocious wars, and these wars "sever the last chain that binds the workers to the masters..."[106] He explicitly repudiated a fatalist interpretation: "Fatalist 'Marxism' has always been a bourgeois-made caricature of Marxist doctrine..." Yet, he lapsed continually into it. "For a consistent Marxist, the entire development of capitalism is nothing but a process of continual reproduction of the contradictions of capitalism on an ever wider scale."[107]

Bukharin was not the first to accuse Luxemburg of setting forth an evolutionary and mechanical image of capitalist collapse. To Luxemburg herself, however, there was no contradiction between her theory of accumulation, which might seem to defer the collapse, and an active revolutionary subject which was to hasten it. In her *Anti-Critique* she addressed herself to

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still a great distance to travel since only the smallest fraction of the entire world production is produced by it," R. Luxemburg, *Einführung in die Nationalökonomie* (Rowohlt, 1972), pp. 134-135.

102. Bukharin, *Imperialism and Accumulation of Capital*, pp. 260-261.

103. *Ibid.*, p. 269.

104. See for example Lukács' review of Bukharin in *Political Writings*, pp. 134f.

105. Bukharin, *Imperialism and Accumulation of Capital*, p. 265.

106. Bukharin, *Imperialism and World Economy* (London, 1972), p. 167.

107. *Ibid.*, pp. 131, 143. A recent study of Bukharin's economic writings explores this ambiguity. The brunt of Bukharin's writings suggest a breakdown of capitalism caused by world wide economic anarchy, state capitalist trusts, and imperialist wars. But to this causal schema Bukharin adds an activist moment: intervention by the proletariat. Knirsch comments: though this addition does not "fit in with the rest of his thought," it was required for tactical reasons. "Bukharin as a 'left Marxist' or as a 'revolutionary theoretician' could not see the end of capitalism as an evolutonary process of the system that occurs inevitably; rather he must root this in the action of the proletariat." Hence, "in relation to the breakdown of capitalism, Bukharin felt compelled out of political-tactical responsibilities to present a 'revolutionary' theory..." *Die ökonomischen Anschauungen Nikolai Bucharins* (Berlin, 1959), pp. 134-135.

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this, as Bauer in a criticism of Luxemburg had stated, "Capitalism will not collapse from the mechanical impossibility of realizing surplus value." In response, she wrote that "the objective impossibility of capitalism at a certain economic stage" "does not mean (it still seems necessary to point out these basics of Marxism to the 'experts') that the historical process has to be, or even could be exhausted to the very limit of this economic impossibility." In the final pages, she would state more emphatically: "*Here* as elsewhere in history, theory is performing its duty if it shows us the *tendency* of development, the logical conclusion to which it is objectively heading. There is as little chance of this conclusion being reached as there was for any other previous period of social development to unfold itself completely. The *need* for it to be reached becomes less as social consciousness, embodied this time in the socialist proletariat, becomes more involved as an active factor in the blind game of forces."[108]

A look back and forward is necessary: The critics of Luxemburg's economic theories spanned the Marxist political spectrum from left communists such as Pannekoek to Bolsheviks (Lenin, Bukharin) to social democrats (Bauer). Till the present her combination of an objective theory of the collapse with a subjective and 'active' politics has caused puzzlement. A recent study states, that Luxemburg's economic theory "had the danger of advancing a mechanical or fatalist conception of revolution. This is exactly the reason why Luxemburg in her political activity implicitly deviated from her 'economic' thesis; this also explains why other revolutionary Marxists did not follow her."[109] But one tradition of left communism did follow the general contours of her theory, though grounded the objective collapse on other foundations.

This left theory of the crisis may seem confused. But one element of socialist history must be emphasized that tends to be lost in the cogent critiques of vulgar Marxism. Simply, the emphasis on a subjective and philosophical dimension of Marxism was hardly unique to left, critical or Western Marxism. If anything, in the period of Luxemburg, this dimension was associated with social-democratic reformism. The stress here was on an

108. Luxemburg, *Anti-Critique*, pp. 149, 147.

109. F. Kool, "Einleitung," *Die Partei gegen die Parteiherrschaft* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1970), p. 68. For a completely opposite opinion see I. Fetscher, "Postscript" to P. Fröhlich, *Rosa Luxemburg* (London, 1972). "Only the low level of the scientific research into her work is to blame for the fact that even today the mistaken idea is being peddled around that there is an antithesis between the 'necessity of socio-economic development' exhibited in her main work and her tendency to favour revolutionary activism" (p. 308). Cf. R. Schlesinger, *Marx: His Time and Ours* (London, 1950), p. 188, and N. Geras, "Luxemburg's Concept of Collapse," *New Left Review*, 81 (November-December, 1973), and Andrew Arato, "Reexamining the Second International," *Telos*, 18 (Winter, 1973-74), especially pp. 15f. The last two essays appeared during the late stages of this one. I essentially agree with the direction of Geras' piece. I think that Arato, in his discussion of Luxemburg, tends towards an ahistorical critique; that is, to accuse Luxemburg of not resolving "the rigid antinomy of political activism and economic determinism" (pp. 26-27) is insufficient without exploring the real historical situation that might have blocked a more adequate—or ideal—dialectical formulation.

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ethical and conscious choice of socialism coupled with a denial of an economic and objective crisis. From Luxemburg to Mattick the theory of the objective crisis cannot be abstracted from this reformist context; that is, it sought to demarcate the left from the social democrats. But, of course, it was more than strategic in the immediate sense; the theory of the objective collapse opened the way for a decisive subjective intervention.

The link between a revisionist theory that rejected a breakdown and a policy of practical piecemeal reforms is not far afield. If there were no objective collapse, the necessity for socialism shifted solely to a subjective and idealist dimension which could only move within the status quo. Hence, Tugan-Baranowsky, who foresaw no collapse in the economy, found the imperative for socialism in ethics, in the "contradiction" between the capitalist system and ethical norms. He closed his book, "Humanity will not receive socialism as the gift of blind, elementary economic powers, but must consciously work and fight for the new social order."[110] Similarly, with Bernstein and a whole host of revisionists and 'left' Kantians, the ethical and idealist note would predominate. Some years later Hilferding stated at a party conference "We have been of the opinion that the overthrow of the capitalist system is not to be expected in some fatalist manner, nor will it enter by the inner laws of the system; but that the overthrow of the capitalist system must be the conscious deed of the working class."[111]

IV

The contradiction or the tension contained in political economy reaches its most extreme point, and most extreme clarity in the work of Henryk Grossmann, and in the discussions, essentially by the left communists, which it inspired. A full account of Grossmann's own politics will not be made here – in part, because the material is not available. In any case, Grossmann was fundamentally an economist and the political content of his economics is most revealing as interpreted by the left communists, most importantly by Paul Mattick. As Mattick himself wrote, defending the adoption of Grossmann's economic analysis by Mattick's political group – a section of the IWW – they did so "without, in general, sufficiently knowing or even wanting to take into account Grossmann's political interpretation" of his own economics.[112]

Yet, it is important to note that Grossmann's own politics cannot simply be classified as those of an orthodox Marxist, and that his pre-Frankfurt School relation with Carl Grünberg's more traditional Marxism and his post-World War II settling in East Germany marks him as one close to the official Communist Party, Russia, and distant from the critical theory of the

110. M. Tugan-Baranowsky, *Theoretische Grundlagen des Marxismus*, p. 239.
111. R. Hilferding, "Die Aufgabe der Sozialdemokratie in der Republik," p. 165.
112. P. Mattick, "Zur marxschen Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchstheorie" (1934), in Korsch, Mattick, et al, *Zusammenbruchstheorie des Kapitalismus oder revolutionäres Subjekt* (West Berlin, 1973), p. 47.

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Frankfurt School.[113] It seems certain that at least between the rise of Hitler and the German invasion of Russia, Grossmann was sympathetic to left anti-Communist Party groups.[114] He wrote to Mattick in 1933 that he was convinced that the Communist Party did not fail in Germany because of an isolated error. "The Nazis made many many mistakes and they, however, were victorious. But the basic mistake of the German Communist Party was that at its head stood figures without responsibility, who were not capable of making autonomous decisions at decisive moments. All independent people, who were capable of autonomous thinking, were pushed out of the Party. What was left behind was a bureaucracy that was slavishly subject to Moscow. On the command of Moscow, however, a revolution is not made."[115]

The bulk of Grossmann's economic writings dealt with the laws and dynamics of accumulation or the causes and nature of capitalist crises and collapse. In this he considered his own contribution as absolutely novel for post-Marx writings as 1) production was the center of attention and not problems of realization—markets, consumption, etc., and 2) within production, it was not mere disproportions, but the falling rate of profit that was crucial. In this he differed from the two main previous types of crisis theories; these either located the fundamental contradiction between production and consumption, or production and markets, as with Luxemburg; or located it as disproportions—not contradictions—within production. The accent and emphasis in Grossmann was placed on the objective and lawful unfolding of contradictions that inexorably rendered capitalist economy impossible.

Grossmann's first Marxist writings (1924) offered a sympathetic reading of Sismondi, a reading which sought to correct the notion that Sismondi was simply an under-consumptionist; rather, Grossmann made a case that Sismondi, like Marx, anchored the crises in a more fundamental contradiction. "If the classical school considered the crises as accidental phenomena provoked by an erroneous commercial policy...for Sismondi the crises are the *necessary* consequences of a defectively constructed economic mechanism which is based on exchange value."[116] As with Marx, underconsumption is not so much the cause as the effect of crises.

In 1928-29 Grossmann published several essays on Marxism and his main work, *Das Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchsgesetz des kapitalistischen Systems* (The Law of Accumulation and Breakdown of the Capitalist System). The first of these essays appraised Fritz Sternberg's *Der*

113. See M. Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School* (Boston, 1973), p. 151.

114. Interview with Paul Mattick.

115. "Briefe an Paul Mattick," in Grossmann, *Marx, die klassische Nationalökonomie und das Problem der Dynamik* (Frankfurt, 1969), p. 98.

116. H. Grossmann, *Sismonde de Sismondi et ses théories économiques* (Varsaviae, 1924), p. 42.

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Imperialismus (1926). Sternberg was a disciple, though not an uncritical one, of Luxemburg, and his book is loyal to the major principles of her analysis of accumulation. "We hold that her [Luxemburg's] critique of Marx's [reproduction] schemes are in all decisive points correct and proved. We share with her the opinion that imperialism, that is, the penetration of capitalism into non-capitalist territories, is an immanent necessity... In the links of her proof, however—between the critique of the Marxist scheme of expanded reproduction and the conclusion of the economic and immanent necessity of imperialism—Luxemburg made some decisive errors."[117]

Grossmann had very few kind words to say about Sternberg, nor, it might be added, about any previous Marxist economist. He ridiculed the notion of Sternberg, who was here following Luxemburg, that the non-capitalist territories serve as outlets and markets for a *surplus* of profits produced in the capitalist countries. To Grossmann this misread the ill of capitalism which cannot suffer from too much profits. "Capitalism, whose very goal is the hunt after surplus value, suffers then from 'too much' surplus value!" "In reality—and this is the decisive thought of Marx's breakdown theory—the surplus value does not suffice to expand capital at a certain level of capital accumulation. There is absolute over-accumulation, and the inevitable end of capitalist production, the collapse; capital cannot practice its particular function, the expansion of capital."[118] This notion of "over-accumulation" would be greatly unfolded in Grossmann's major work.

Grossmann's comments on the political meaning of Sternberg's contribution are clues to his own political position. Sternberg treated imperialism and imperialist wars as possibly negatively effecting revolutionary change, decreasing the chances for socialism; a static condition he called "Geschichtslosigkeit" could be the result of imperialist wars, a state lacking change and history.[119] To Grossmann this smacked of revisionism, though to be sure Sternberg, like Luxemburg, expressly rejected revisionism. According to Grossmann, insofar as Sternberg denied the necessity of socialism, he opted for an ethical imperative; and though he repudiated revisionist practices, his thought contained an "inner relationship to revisionism."[120] With Sternberg "independent of the effective forces in capitalism, moreover in contradiction to them, socialism is made dependent on subjective-voluntarist moments..." Citing Lenin to the effect that revolutions are not "made," but grow out of objective crises, Grossmann called Sternberg's doctrine a "mixture of an old Blanquist tradition and anarcho-communism."[121]

117. F. Sternberg, *Der Imperialismus* (Berlin, 1926), p. 88. For a defense of Luxemburg *against* Sternberg, see L. Laurat, *L'Accumulation du capital* (Paris, 1930).
118. H. Grossmann, "Ein neue Theorie über Imperialismus und soziale Revolution," in Grossmann, *Aufsätze zur Krisentheorie* (Frankfurt, 1971), p. 157.
119. F. Sternberg, *Der Imperialismus*, p. 332.
120. H. Grossmann, "Ein neue Theorie über Imperialismus..." p. 114.
121. *Ibid.*, pp. 132, 134.

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An essay from the following year sought to correlate the various pronouncements of Marx on his plans for the volumes of *Capital* with the actual manuscripts that he left behind. Grossmann was less interested in mere chronology than in the logical relationship between Marx's plans and manuscripts. A word must be said about this, for in some ways, what moves to the fore here, an examination of Marx's method, could be considered Grossmann's most important contribution.[122] Grossmann's attention was drawn to the "inner connection" which existed on a logical and theoretical level between Marx's texts and his concepts.[123] More precisely, in question, was the kind or nature of abstraction that Marx carried out.

This problem moved from the edges to the center of attention with Luxemburg's critique of Marx's reproduction schemes; she argued these schemes were insufficient. As to why Marx would use a defective model, Luxemburg answered in two ways. Volume II of *Capital* was itself unfinisned; "...He broke off his analysis almost as soon as he had begun it."[124] And the diagrams assumed a 'pure' capitalist society composed solely of workers and capitalists which does not exist. Such an assumption is "quite legitimate" in an "analysis of the accumulation of individual capitals, such as is given in *Capital*, volume I." But it is another matter in approaching "the actual conditions" for the accumulation of the total capital. That is: the reproduction schemes posit "the universal and exclusive domination of the capitalist mode of production," but the historical reality is richer, containing non-capitalist sectors—sectors which render the diagram of limited value. The diagram is a "theoretical contrivance—real life has never known a self-sufficient capitalist society under the exclusive domination of the capitalist mode of production."[125]

Discussions on the nature of the reproduction tables as problems of abstraction and methodology predate Luxemburg. Tugan-Baranowsky and Bulgakov had exchanged words on precisely this point.[126] For Grossmann, however, the problem of kind, quality, and level of abstraction that Marx used was not a secondary, but pivotal question. An approach which took up Marx's method promised not only an adequate reply to Luxemburg's critique, but a resolution of many of the contradictions that seemed to exist within the three volumes of *Capital*, e.g., the value-price contradiction![127]

122. See his letter to Mattick: "The most important result of my previous research is the reconstruction of the Annäherungsverfahren," "Briefe an Paul Mattick," in Grossmann, *Marx*, p. 101.

123. H. Grossmann, "Die Aenderung des ursprünglichen Aufbauplans des marxschen 'Kapital' und ihre Ursachen," in *Aufsätze zur Krisentheorie*, p. 17. Grossmann's analysis of Marx's plans and manuscripts was factually defective insofar as the *Grundrisse* was then unknown.

124. R. Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital*, p. 351.

125. *Ibid.*, pp. 348-350.

126. Lenin commented on this exchange and problem: "Schemes alone cannot prove anything; they can only illustrate a process if *its separate elements have been theoretically explained*." "Notes on the Question of the Market Theory," *Collected Works*, IV, p. 62.

127. Several recent works have pursued this project, examining the logic and method of *Capital*; see H. Reichelt, *Zur logischen Struktur des Kapitalbegriffs bei Karl Marx* (Frankfurt,

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Marx, according to Grossmann, utilized a methodology of approximating levels of abstraction; each stage of the analysis seeks to grasp another stage of concreteness. These levels of analysis do not contradict each other, as they might seem if simply compared; rather they exist on a continuum which is proceeding from the more abstract and general towards the more concrete and particular. This is what Grossmann called Marx's *Annäherungsverfahren*, a methodology which itself is a process of approaching the concrete, or "successive approximations." "Every preliminary simplification corresponds to a later concretization."[128] Hence, to Grossmann, Marx excluded external markets and 'third persons' from the reproduction schemes not because he was oblivious to them, but because they do not belong to the absolutely necessary conditions of accumulation. Marx introduced such factors elsewhere because he was operating on different levels of abstraction and concreteness. The *Annäherungsverfahren* moved from the abstract to the concrete.[129]

This method itself was used in Grossmann's main work, and if forgotten caused and causes some confusion. This is because a significant section of his book is a refutation of Bauer which proceeded strictly mathematically; this is to be discussed below, but here it can be viewed as an example of his methodology. Considered alone, it would appear that Grossmann was attempting to prove the collapse of capitalism, and the refutation of Bauer, simply by some mathematical and abstract tables; the truth, however, is that this was one step of Grossmann's method of moving toward the concrete.

Let us look first at the economic and then at the political content of Grossmann's theory of the collapse. Grossmann, in a short essay, categorized previous crises theories as follows: (This essay was an unsigned entry to a 'people's encyclopedia; hence he discusses his own theory in the third person). Theories such as Bukharin's that were imprecise, structured around increasing tensions and contradictions; these were neither definite nor concrete. Such "breakdown theories are as scientific tools superfluous."[130] The other variety (Luxemburg, the earlier Kautsky) derived crises not from production but lack of markets or events in circulation. "In contradiction to all previous theoreticians of the breakdown Grossmann in his main work... and in numerous other treatments...opened a new way in that he explained the decisive cause of the unavoidable fall of the capitalist system by the *overaccumulation of capital in the highly developed lands,* and in the

1970); O. Morf, *Geschichte und Dialektik in der politischen Oekonomie* (Frankfurt, 1970, first edition, 1951); J. Zeleny, *Die Wissenschaftlogik bei Marx und 'Das Kapital'* (Frankfurt, 1972).

128. H. Grossmann, "Die Aenderung des ursprünglichen Aufbauplans..." p. 34.

129. Sweezy who otherwise is quite hard on Grossmann begins his *Theory of Capitalist Development* with a brief sympathetic discussion of Grossmann's interpretation of Marx's method.

130. H. Grossmann, "Sozialismus und Kommunismus," in Grossmann, Grünberg, *Anarchismus, Bolschewismus, Sozialismus: Aufsätze aus dem 'Wörterbuch der Volkswirtschaft,'* ed. C. Pozzoli (Frankfurt, 1971), p. 329.

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resulting *insufficient self-expansion* of capital—by, that is, occurrences in production itself."[131]

What does this mean? Marx divided the value of a product into constant (c), variable (v), and surplus (s). The variable and surplus divide between themselves the value of labor. The variable is paid out in wages to the worker, while the surplus—the origin but not identical to profit—goes to the capitalist. The rate of surplus value (s) defines a ratio; it expresses the relationship between the surplus labor and the necessary or variable, or S' = s/v. Note that here the constant value (c) which is sunk into machinery plays no role in this ratio. But the organic composition of capital, mentioned previously, should be recalled. This refers to a dual analysis of capital, from both the value and material side, and again is a ratio; from the value side, it is the ratio of constant to variable or c/v. The general trend of accumulation is towards the increase in the organic composition of capital. This means, considered as a ratio, there is an increase in the mass of means of production in comparison to the mass of living labor. More simply, this refers to mechanization or automatization in which there is an increase in the amount of machinery in relation to the amount of living labor. There is a "progressive increase in constant capital, in proportion to the variable. . ."[132]

These two ratios—the rate of surplus value and the organic composition —become crucial in illuminating the movement of capital. The rate of surplus value (s') reflects the division of the working day between the surplus that accrues to the capitalist and the necessary which is paid to the worker. The capitalist, of course, seeks to increast the rate of surplus value, in the earlier stages of capitalism by extending the working day, and in the later by increasing productivity; both expand the surplus in relation to the variable; or s/v increases—also called the rate of exploitation. However, the capitalist is not simply interested in what he pays out to the workers themselves; he is as interested in what he sinks into machinery; and this assumes a larger and larger share in relation to variable labor. The rate of profit (p') expresses the surplus value in relation to *both* the variable and constant, and this is what is critical to the capitalist: p' = s/v+c. If c increases in significant amounts, regardless of increases in s—within limits—the rate of profit will fall; exactly this is the tendency of the falling rate of profit.[133]

Grossmann was not the first to discuss the falling rate of profit; in most previous presentations of the crisis and breakdown it is mentioned, but only

131. *Ibid.*, p. 330.

132. Marx, *Capital I*, pp. 612-622.

133. In this context two neglected American works that discuss debates in Marxist economics, including the falling rate of profit, and which are well worth consulting, should be mentioned: L. Boudin, *The Theoretical System of Karl Marx* (Chicago, 1907 and New York, 1967), and William Blake (a pseudonym), *Elements of Marxian Economic Theory* (New York, 1939), also published as *An American Looks at Karl Marx*.

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mentioned—or it is rejected.[134] Prior to Grossmann it received very little attention. Moreover Grossmann stressed a neglected relationship: that between the falling *rate* of profit and the *mass* of profits. The falling rate of profit was itself an abstraction, a mere ratio. "The collapse cannot follow from the cause of the falling rate of profit."[135] What is important is the actual quantities involved. "Why does the capitalist class need worry about the falling rate of profit if the mass of profit grows?" It becomes of concern only when the falling rate is translated into an absolute decrease; prior to that, the rate can fall, but the slack, so to speak, is taken up by expanding mass. "The falling rate of profit is only an index signifying the relative fall of the mass of profits." "Only in this sense can it also be said that with the fall of the rate of profit the system collapses, since the profit rate falls because the mass of profits relatively decreases."[136]

Much misunderstanding of Grossmann was due to his refutation of Bauer. Bauer was one of the more substantial critics of Luxemburg, and sought to show through his own figures, based on the reproduction diagrams, that in fact accumulation was possible in a 'pure' capitalist society. Bauer's figures seemed to demonstrate that there was no surplus that required an external market. To Grossmann this proof was unacceptable because it denied the historical imperative of socialism. "By keeping to the named proportions, there is no objective limit, no economic end point to capitalism in which the breakdown of the capitalist means of production is unavoidable." Grossmann takes Bauer's own figures, which Bauer had only carried out for four years, and shows that if carried out for 36 years, they prove the reverse of what Bauer had sought. "Had Bauer followed the development of the reproduction process for sufficient time, he would have recognized the inevitable collapse of his system." Grossmann showed that the constant capital grew from 50% to 82.9% in the 34th year, and that by the 36th year, the "over-accumulated" capital can no longer provide enough mass of profits for further expansion, nor even for the capitalist's own consumption. According to these figures, the system would collapse in the 36th year.[137]

Such a refutation of Bauer led to the misunderstanding by many who read Grossmann that he was arguing for a strictly automatic and mathematical breakdown of capital; rather he took up the Bauer figures as the most "favorable case" of the accumulation of capital. He proceeded to follow Bauer's own assumptions "since a fruitful immanent critique is only possible when one refutes the opponent from the latter's own position."[138] In fact, Grossmann was well aware of the counter-tendencies to the

134. A notable exception is Erich Preiser's essay from 1924, "Das Wesen der marxschen Krisentheorie," in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Festschrift für Franz Oppenheimer* (Frankfurt, 1924), and reprinted in Preiser, *Politische Oekonomie im 20. Jahrhundert* (München, 1970).
135. H. Grossmann, *Das Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchsgesetz*... p. 196.
136. *Ibid.*, pp. 197, 198.
137. *Ibid.*, pp. 108f.
138. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

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breakdown; and about half the book explores these. Exactly these counter-tendencies defined the "crises" which Grossmann carefully delineated from the breakdown or collapse. "The crisis is an interrupted and not fully developed tendency towards a collapse." For this reason Grossmann's book is subtitled "Zugleich eine Kreisentheorie" (at the same time, a crisis theory). Both a methodological and political consideration dictated an examination of the counter-tendencies; a methodological one, because after setting forth the laws of accumulation in their 'pure form,' it is necessary to "investigate the hitherto ignored concrete circumstances under which capitalist accumulation actually proceeds and to search out how far they modify the development of the tendencies of the pure laws." And the political question is not why capitalism collapses, but "why it has not already collapsed." [139]

The question of the political content of Grossmann's breakdown theory permits no single neat response. First, and foremost, to Grossmann it was absolutely crucial to prove the economic inevitability of the breakdown of capitalism; to do other would be to desert the materialist foundations of Marxism. But does this inevitability mean an automatic breakdown? Grossmann praised Luxemburg for affirming the inevitability of a collapse, though rejected totally her analysis of it. Moreover, he declared that insofar as her account depends on and waits till the entire world turns capitalist it "assumes a mechanical end of the capitalist system." "Theoretically, a situation is anticipated such as many revolutionaries want to see; they hope that every crisis will be the 'automatic destruction of capitalism.' Lenin had here a more profound insight into things when he said: 'Many times revolutionaries attempt to prove that the crisis is absolutely without escape. *There are no positions which are absolutely without escape'.*" Hence Grossmann accused Luxemburg of a "quietist fatalism which leaves no room for the class struggle."[140]

Grossmann explicitly repudiated an automatic breakdown which excluded a human role. Towards the end of his book he noted that many have rejected the breakdown theory because it seemed incompatible with the class struggle; their reasoning is that it would be pointless to improve the situation of the working class if a catastrophe was in the offing. "In contradiction to this interpretation is our position: ...the breakdown of capitalism, although under given assumptions objectively necessary and chronologically exactly calculable, nevertheless need not 'by itself' automatically occur at the expected period; for that reason it is not to be waited for passively. Rather its occurence can be influenced within certain limits by both of the classes." Grossmann concluded "that the notion of the necessity of the collapse from objective causes is no where in contradiction to the class struggle; rather the collapse, despite its objectively given necessity,

139. *Ibid.*, pp. 290, 288-289.
140. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

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is in a large measure under the influence of the living forces of the struggling classes and permits a certain room for the active intervention of the classes."[141]

Grossmann's encyclopedia piece would restate this: "For Grossmann it is from the beginning self-understood that for the proletariat it cannot be a question of a fatalist waiting for the 'automatic' collapse, without an active intervention. The old regime, if it is not overthrown (Lenin), never tumbles by itself, even in times of crisis. The meaning of the Marxist theory of the collapse consists, according to Grossmann, only in the demarcation of voluntarism and putschism; these hold that the revolution is possible any time, dependent solely on the subjective will of the revolutionaries, without consideration of the *objective revolutionary situation.*"[142] In a letter to Mattick from 1931 he attempted to remove the impression that he believed in an automatic downfall. "It should be evident that the notion that capitalism must 'by itself' or 'automatically' collapse is alien to me... But I did wish to show that the class struggle alone is *not* sufficient... As a *dialectical* Marxist, I know that both sides of the process, objective and subjective elements, mutually influence each other. In the class struggle both these factors blend. One cannot 'wait' until *first* the 'objective' conditions are met, and only *then* let the 'subjective' elements go to work. That would be an insufficient and mechanical interpretation which is alien to me. But for the purposes of the analysis I had to employ an abstract isolating procedure... My breakdown theory does not intend to exclude the active intervention, but rather hopes to show, when and under which conditions such an objective revolutionary situation can and will arise."[143]

A word on Grossmann's later economic writings; several of these works were historical studies of pre-Marxist economists who, like Marx, had studied obejctive trends in the economy. The point in these studies was to highlight what Marx actually did contribute, and not dismiss Marx simply as the discoverer of objective laws. "...The true originator of the doctrine of the objective developmental trends of capitalism was William Playfair..."[144] Or elsewhere: "By attributing to Marx the first application of evolutionary thinking to economics, critics have obliterated the original contribution that Marx really did make..."[145] The theoretical framework remained the same; Marx taught "that no economic system, no matter how weakened, collapses by itself in automatic fashion. It must be 'overthrown.' The theoretical analysis of the objective trends leading to a paralysis of the system serves to discover the 'weak links.' Change will come about only

141. *Ibid.*, p. 602.
142. H. Grossmann, "Sozialismus und Kommunismus," pp. 335-336.
143. H. Grossmann, "Briefe an Paul Mattick," p. 88.
144. H. Grossmann, "William Playfair, The Earliest Theorist of Capitalist Development," *Economic History Review*, XVIII, 1-2 (1948), p. 67.
145. H. Grossmann, "The Evolutionist Revolt against Classical Economics," *Journal of Political Economy*, LI, 5-6 (1943), p. 518.

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through the active operation of the subjective factors."[146]

V

Grossmann's work, essentially his accumulation book, was discussed in various quarters; yet a serious treatment of it was confined to the left communists, and finally it was only a left communist, Paul Mattick, who over the years remained loyal to the outlines of Grossmann's theory. What must be studied is the possibility of an internal link between the economic analysis of Grossmann and the politics of left communism.[147] It should be noted that others discussed the politics and economics of Grossmann's work; two of these can be mentioned insofar as they address themselves to the political dimension of his theory. A. Braunthal, writing in a social democratic organ, *Die Gesellschaft*, first rejected the bulk of Grossmann's economic analysis, and then pondered the reason for its appeal. "If the theoreticians of the breakdown are not communists in the party sense, the psychological roots of their theory are the same as the communist movement. They combine the belief in the necessity of a socialist transformation of society with a *lack* of confidence in the power of the working class."[148] E. Varga, in an organ of the Communist Party, *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus* would find just the opposite: Grossmann "completely

146. *Ibid.*, p. 520. A note on the other contributions of Grossmann that do directly take up the crisis theory: these other essays, and his book on Marx, were grounded in his methodology of "successive approximations." They attempted to salvage Marxist categories which existed on different levels of concreteness and which had been ignored in previous discussions. He continually criticized the analyses of Bauer and Luxemburg, though not for the same reasons as in his accumulation book; here it was because they remained fixated on the abstract value schemes of volume two of *Capital* and failed to consider the equally important role played by concrete prices, essentially developed in volume three. These more concrete prices had to be considered regardless if one were proving or disproving a crisis theory. It is immaterial "if one is opting for the necessity and inevitability of crises in capitalism... or maintaining the possibility of development without crises;" in either case "it is clear that conclusions drawn from the value schemes are premature and lack proof." To demonstrate, however, that capitalism *is* susceptible to crises it is not possible to "confine the analysis to the first step of the Annäherungsverfahren—the value schema—but it must be followed and proved for all the steps, including the prices of production schema." ("Der Wert-Preis Transformation bei Marx und das Krisenproblem," in *Aufsätze zur Krisentheorie*.)

Grossmann's essay on gold production pursued a similar theme. More fundamental than Luxemburg's error of attempting to correct Marx's two departments by the addition of a third, was her error of ascribing to the value schemes absolute reality, though she was aware of this failing in others. ("Die Goldproduktion im Reproduktionschema von Marx und Rosa Luxemburg," *ibid.*) In his book on Marx, Grossmann reiterated the inadequacy of the pure value approach to capitalism. The analysis that sticks only to exchange value loses the dialectic of exchange and use value; the common notion that in Marx the use value is excluded "rests on a misunderstanding" (*Marx*, p. 72). Similarly, the Marxist analysis unfolds work in its dual activity, producing use and exchange value, while the classical theories were unable to go beyond exchange value.

147. For a discussion of the politics of left communism in Germany, see the excellent work of Hans M. Bock, *Syndikalismus und Linkskommunismus von 1918-1923* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1969).

148. A. Braunthal, "Der Zusammenbruch der Zusammenbruchstheorie," *Die Gesellschaft*, VI (1929), p. 304.

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hides his political perspective! He declares himself no where in the book for the dictatorship of the proletariat, no where for the necessity of the armed struggle against the bourgeoisie, no where does he place himself on the side of the Soviet Union... Grossmann is silent. But for a Marxist it is not permitted to be quiet; it is not permitted to hide one's political face! He must speak, even with the danger of forfeiting becoming professor at the University of Frankfurt!"[149]

The left communists, if sympathetic, differed internally on the validity of both sides of Grossmann's theory, the economic and political. Pannekoek's essay from 1934, "Die Zusammenbruchstheorie des Kapitalismus," rejected both the economic and political meaning of Grossmann's book. Pannekoek reiterated his differences with both Luxemburg and Bauer. The substance of his economic critique of Grossmann centered on the fact that Grossmann in his Bauer response kept the constant capital increasing at a steady rate of 10% till overaccumulation and the collapse is reached. In reality, claimed Pannekoek, a capitalist would expand production only so far as he has sufficient capital, that is, he would slow expansion prior to the point of overaccumulation.[150]

But more to the point for Pannekoek was the mechanistic and fatalist interpretation of the capitalist economy that Grossmann offered. For Marx the economic development proceeds like a natural law. "But at the same time it is the work of men who play a role in it." The bourgeois and static approach deals in dualisms: occurences follow either human will or iron laws. "For Marx all social necessity is mediated through men..." Grossmann does not understand this. "The Marxist interpretation...that the collapse of capitalism is the deed of the working class—a political act—he can only understand as 'voluntaristic'..." The will of the working class is itself conditioned by economic developments; but socialism will not arrive because capitalism collapses and "forces men—workers and others—through necessity to create a new organization." Rather, socialism will be attained when capitalism becomes "unendurable" and drives the working class to overthrow the economic system. "Not because this unendurability will be demonstrated from without, rather because it will be felt spontaneously, drives them to action." Though Grossmann has the same opponents as us, social democracy and the communists of the third international—"two branches of the same tree"—his conclusions are completely different. "The self-liberation of the proletariat is the collapse of capitalism."[151]

Korsch, in another left communist periodical, observed that the shifting positions by social democrats and communists on the nature of the crisis had

149. E. Varga, "Akkumulation und Zusammenbruch des Kapitalismus," *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, IV (1930), p. 66.

150. A. Pannekoek, "Die Zusammenbruchstheorie des Kapitalismus," in Korsch, Mattick, et al, *Zusammenbruchstheorie des Kapitalismus*, p. 122.

151. *Ibid.*, pp. 128-133.

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brought revisionists and revolutionaries down on both sides of the dispute. He explained this by the fact that various crisis theories are reflections of the crisis condition of the objective reality. "One could under this perspective present the entire historical development of socialist crisis theories from Fourier and Sismondi to the various chronological phases of Marx and Engels and later Marxists and epigones of Marx through Sternberg and Grossmann...as mere passive reflections of the preceding objective economic development."[152] The subjective crisis theory is no more appropriate than the objective. Rather there is only one "materialistic attitude" to take towards the crisis. "This attitude declares the whole question of the objective necessity or unavoidability of the capitalist crisis—on this general level—a meaningless question in regards to practical proletarian revolutionary theory." In a restricted sense Korsch agreed with Sorel that the meaning of a crisis is that of a myth which has practical import on the action of the working class. What is necessary is "ever more exact and fundamental empirical research" on the capitalist production within an "activist-materialistic standpoint."[153]

The most sympathetic of the left communists to Grossmann's analysis was Paul Mattick who, moreover, continued to expound a variation of it till the present. Mattick, a friend of Korsch, and for a while of Grossmann, came to the U.S. in 1926; here he worked with a section of the IWW, later edited a magazine *Living Marxism: New Essays*, and contributed some reviews to the Frankfurt School journal. His small book on unemployment, *Arbeitslosigkeit und Arbeitslosenbewegung in den USA 1929-1935*, was commissioned but was not published by the Frankfurt School, as apparently its Marxism was too explicit for that period of Frankfurt School caution.[154]

To Mattick, Grossmann's analysis was correct in its economic theory and non-mechanistic in its political content. "Die Todeskrise des Kapitalismus" (1933), a program of a section of the IWW which Mattick authored, directly endorsed Grossmann's theory, and made clear its distance from passivity and fatalism. "We repudiate any mechanistic interpretation of the breakdown of capital." And as "adherents of the materialist dialectic," "we know that completely definite conditions are necessary to make possible the overthrow of capital. The will of the proletariat does not suffice; without these definite conditions such a will cannot at all develop."[155]

An essay from the following year, "Zur marxschen Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchstheorie," is more substantial and detailed in its uses of Grossmann, following his economic analysis of the absolute primacy of the laws of accumulation. Pannekoek's objections that men make history misses

152. K. Korsch, "Ueber einege grundsätzliche Voraussetzungen für eine materialistische Diskussion der Krisentheorie," *ibid.*, p. 93.

153. *Ibid.*, pp. 97, 98.

154. Mattick Interview.

155. P. Mattick, "Die Todeskrise des Kapitalismus," in *Zusammenbruchstheorie des Kapitalismus*, p. 102.

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the point. "In capitalism the reified relations dominate men, not men things." For Grossmann there is no purely economic and automatic breakdown, though, to be sure, in order to "theoretically illustrate" the dialectic, one can distinguish between the objective and subjective moments and "confine oneself to a purely economic investigation." But the full dialectic "excludes pure economism." However, the economic situation is decisive; the "mass uprising cannot develop out of 'intellect-consciousness'..[156] Capital itself "hinders the full application of the moment of consciousness in the social life process. But consciousness finally carries through, and it can do so only under such conditions in which it can be concretized." "For Marxists and for Grossmann," Mattick closed, "the economic limits [of capital] and the proletarian revolution are identical."[157]

Several essays from these years would continue to expound Grossmann's theory, either directly or indirectly. "The law of accumulation is the law of collapse," Mattick wrote in "The Permanent Crisis" (1934). "But capitalism does not collapse automatically; the factor of human action, though conditioned, is powerful. The death crisis of capitalism does not mean that the system commits suicide... There is, as Lenin said, no absolutely hopeless situation for capitalism; it depends on the workers as to how long capitalism will be able to vegetate..."[158] A pamphlet from the following year, "The Inevitability of Communism," a critique of Sidney Hook, accented both elements of Mattick's thought, the inevitability of the collapse —"the capitalist mode of production has an *absolute economic limit*"[159] — and the spontaneous non-mechanistic content on this collapse. "The theory of collapse does not rest upon an automatic process, nor does the concept of spontaneity assume on any mystical ground that the masses sometime or other will break out in revolt." "...The rejection of the concept that communism is inevitable involves also the rejection of the spontaneity theory."[160]

A word should be said about Mattick's position in relation to Lenin and Luxemburg, which suggests if not the dialectic the complexities of the economics-politics nexus. Mattick, like the other left-communists, is on nearly every issue closer to Luxemburg than Lenin: questions of spontaneity, party, national question, peasantry. But on the narrow or not-so-narrow grounds of Luxemburg's economics, he switches his loyalties to Lenin, while repudiating Lenin's political conclusions. "In direct

156. P. Mattick, "Zur marxschen Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchstheorie," *ibid.*, pp. 55, 49.
157. *Ibid.*, pp. 69, 70.
158. P. Mattick, "The Permanent Crisis: H. Grossmann's Interpretation of Marx's Theory of Capitalist Accumulation," *International Council Correspondence*, 2 (November, 1934), p. 20.
159. P. Mattick, *The Inevitability of Communism: A Critique of Sidney Hook's Interpretation of Marx* (New York, 1935), p. 25.
160. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

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contradiction to this theory of Luxemburg is Lenin's interpretation... In complete agreement with Marx he searches for the contradictions, which indicate the historical limits of capital, not, as with Luxemburg, in circulation, but in the sphere of production."[161] Hence Lenin traces crises and imperialism not to underconsumption and market problems, but to production and profit. "Without doubt Lenin's interpretation stands closer to Marxism than Luxemburg's. She was completely correct in recognizing in the Marxist theory of accumulation the breakdown laws of capital: but she overlooked the Marxist proof of it and produced her own theory of realization, which Lenin rightly rejected as false and un-Marxist."[162] Yet, the *political* conclusions that Lenin drew were false, and Luxemburg's correct; Luxemburg's defective economic analysis retained the notion of the collapse as an "economic necessity." Lenin, "who stood much closer to Social Democracy than did Luxemburg, saw the capitalist collapse more as a conscious political act..." Mattick's conclusions to this argument are worth citing: "...Luxemburg rightly emphasized that for Marx the laws of accumulation were also the laws of collapse. Her proof was false; nevertheless her conclusions correct. If she completely deviates from Marx in explaining the laws of collapse, she continues to recognize the existence of it. Lenin's arguments against Luxemburg were valid, and *so far as they went*, in agreement with Marx, yet he avoided the question whether an objective limit is given to capital. His theory, which is more correct, does not lead to real revolutionary conclusions. Exactly Luxemburg's false proof remains revolutionary."[163]

All of Mattick's works cannot be discussed here, especially his most original contribution: the questions of state intervention, mixed economy, etc. One can note, however, an increasing caution and pessimism in his analysis, though with an unchanging commitment to the main contours of Grossmann's theory. Hence, his book on unemployment sticks to the centrality of the laws of accumulation in fathoming unemployment, while making some fleeting references to the importance of ideology and psychology in hindering revolutionary movements. The belief in American success and prosperity was strong. "If the ideology of prosperity was only a psychosis for the broad mass of workers, and a reality only for the worker's aristocracy, it stimulated hopes in all strata of the population and diminished at the same time possibilities of protest from sectors not included in the prosperity..."[164] Discussing the difficulties of socialist theory

161. Paul Mattick, "Die Gegensätze zwischen Luxemburg und Lenin" (1935), reprinted in *Gruppe Internationale Kommunisten Hollands*, ed. G. Mergner (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1971), p. 181.

162. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

163. *Ibid.*, p. 186. See the comments of R. Dunayevskaya on Mattick's argument in her "Analysis of Rosa Luxemburg's *Accumulation of Capital*," which is included in her pamphlet titled *State-Capitalism and Marx's Humanism or Philosophy and Revolution* (Detroit, 1967), p. 41.

164. P. Mattick, *Arbeitslosigkeit und Arbeitslosenbewegung in den USA 1929-1935* (1936),

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reaching the unemployed, Mattick even sympathetically cited an essay by Erich Fromm from the Frankfurt School journal, "The Method and Function of an Analytic Social Psychology." "...Biological and psychological moments are at play in the conscious and unconscious actions of men, but these moments are to the greatest extent influenced by definite social life processes," Mattick wrote, following Fromm.[165]

A later essay, "Fascism Made in the USA," showed more caution in the formulation of the collapse of capital. "The question as to whether capital will be able once more to overcome its present stagnation and decline...is not an economic question. There does not exist a purely economic problem at all. However, by taking economic phenomena out of the social setting of which they are a part, it becomes possible to shed some light on the developmental tendencies of the latter... From a 'purely economic' point of view there is indeed no reason why capitalism should not be able to overcome its present difficulties."[166] "To prove scientifically the inevitability of capitalism's collapse will always remain a futile attempt... All that can be pointed out are the reasons why the growth of capital implies the growth of the contradiction inherent in its productive system..." "...That there is an objective end to capitalism, that its final collapse is assured, changes nothing of the fact that capitalism must be abolished through human actions in order to cease. The argument about the objective end, however correct, finally amounts to no more than the recognition of the obvious, that all things and all institutions come to an end in time."[167]

Mattick's most recent essays have retained a commitment to the collapse of capitalism as worked out by Grossmann while accentuating the crucial political context. Defending Grossmann against the charge of an automatic breakdown, he asserted that the crisis only "offers the chance to transform the class struggle inside society into a struggle for another form of society."[168] Or he could write that "the crisis forms the necessary but not sufficient precondition for revolutionary action..."[169] Or: "There is no situation absolutely without escape for the capitalist economy. Even in Marx's theory of accumulation and crisis, capitalism does not break down by itself; but it finds its possible end in the political actions released by the crisis."[170]

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ed. F. Hermanin and C. Pozzoli (Frankfurt, 1969), pp. 95-96.

165. *Ibid.*, p. 111. Fromm's essay is translated and found in his collection *The Crisis of Psychoanalysis* (Fawcett, 1971). As far as I know this is the only place where Mattick shows any interest in psychoanalysis, which does not mean there is a necessary antithesis between left communism and psychoanalysis; see for example the essay by Serge Bricianer, who has edited a collection of Pannekoek's writings, "Psychoanalyse et mouvement social," *Mise au Point*, I (1972).

166. P. Mattick, "Fascism made in the USA," *Living Marxism*, V, 3 (1941), p. 15.

167. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

168. P. Mattick, "Nachwort" to Grossmann, *Marx*, p. 127.

169. P. Mattick, "Aktuelles Vorwort," to *Zusammenbruchstheorie des Kapitalismus*, p. 12.

170. *Ibid.*, p. 9. For two recent statements by Mattick see "Die gemischte Oekonomie und

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VI

Some conclusions about political economy and the politics of the crisis theory:

Political economy is the theory as well as the product of bourgeois society. The first sentence of Engels' first economic writings stated simply that "political economy came into being as a natural result of the expansion of trade."[171] Political economy emerges as a distinct entity exactly when the economy emerges as an entity freed from previous historical, ethical and religious trappings. Between Smith and Ricardo economics splits off a political and legislative universe and takes shape as a separate inquiry into the laws of the economy itself.[172] From a Marxist point of view reification inheres in the very notion of political economy. Political economy presents "the economic life processes of humanity" as a "natural relation between things" because these relations themselves are reified.[173] Political economy is ideology, the theory of a society where things dominate people.

Yet the Marxist *critique* of political economy is also a political economy—or so it appears; and this is exactly the contradiction. The laws of political economy are abstractions that possess a certain validity. To the point these laws present social and historical relations as non-historical relations, they serve as alibis for the status quo; but to the point the laws accurately portray a society in which things do control people, they form part of the critique. In Marx both moments are captured in the notion of tendencies; the laws are never and solely laws, but tendencies. "Absolute laws presuppose an unconscious immediacy between subject and object."[174] They are never absolute because the subject, finally human labor, forms and informs the laws—and suffers them. The critique of political economy

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ihrer Grenzen," in Mattick, *Kapitalistischer Reproduktionsprozess und Klassenbewusstsein* (Hamburg, 1973), p. 9, and "Marxismus und die Unzulänglichkeiten der Arbeiterbewegung," in *Ueber Karl Korsch*, ed. C. Pozzoli (Frankfurt, 1973), pp. 192-193. Recently there has been a growing number of works that have followed implicitly or explicitly Grossmann's and Mattick's general analysis; see D. Yaffe, "The Marxian Theory of Crisis, Capital, and the State," *Bulletin of the Conference of Socialist Economists*, Winter, 1972; D. Yaffe, "Class Struggle and Rate of Profit," *New Left Review*, 80 (July-August, 1973), pp. 45f; M. Cogoy, "The Fall of the Rate of Profit and the Theory of Accumulation," *Bulletin of the Conference of Socialist Economists*, Winter 1973. C. Deutschmann, *Der linke Keynesiasmus* (Frankfurt, 1973). Deutschmann takes issue with Mattick on a number of points. For a critique of Mattick's analysis as excessively abstract, see F. Eberle, "Bermerkungen zur Erklärungsanspruch der marxschen Theorie," in *Aspekte der marxschen Theorie I*, ed. F. Eberle (Frankfurt, 1973). For a different treatment of the crisis theory see T. Schroyer, *The Critique of Domination* (New York, 1973), pp. 180f and *Telos* 14 (Winter, 1972).

171. F. Engels, "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy," in Engels, *Selected Writings*, ed. W.O. Henderson (Pelican, 1967), p. 148.

172. See E. Halévy, *The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism* (Boston, 1955), pp. 247f; K. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston, 1957), pp. 111f.

173. F. Petry, *Der soziale Gehalt der marxschen Werttheorie* (1916), Raubdruck, p. 5. Cf. I.I. Rubin, *Essays on Marx's Theory of Value* (Detroit, 1972), pp. 31f.

174. O. Morf, *Geschichte und Dialektik in der politischen Oekonomie* (Frankfurt, 1970), p. 121.

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is as much a task and hope as a fact; it presents the dead laws of the economy so as to clear the way for their active subversion. The *telos* of the critique of political economy is the abolition of political economy; the misery of the critique of political economy is that it is also a political economy.

In a precise sense there is no such study called Marxist political economy; this at least would be the Western Marxist interpretation. If political economy was the science of society dominated by the (capitalist) economy, when this domination ceases, so would political economy as its expression. The younger Lukács defined liberation from capitalism as "liberation from the rule of the economy." And he added, "When the autonomy of the economy is ended, 'political economy' as an independent science also disappears.[175] Similarly Luxemburg stated, "The victory of the modern working class, and the realization of socialism will be the end of economics as a science."[176] Korsch drew a parallel with his analysis of the relationship of philosophy and revolution. Political economy, like philosophy, could not simply be decreed as transcended; it was historically wed to bourgeois society and would die with it—not before. It would be surpassed only once it had been 'realized' by theoretical and practical activity.[177]

The hope of the critique of political economy is that it is more than political economy; the danger is that it is only political economy. It is the unfree science of an unfree society; its mechanical format is derived from a mechanical life. Or as Marx put it, rejecting humanist critiques of Ricardo: "The cynicism is in the facts, and not in the words which express the facts."[178] The unrelenting threat of economism is objectively contained in political economy—Marxist and otherwise—and is communicated to the individual theorists; this explains, perhaps, the just as continuous susceptibility of Marxists to vulgar Marxism. Conversely, it is at least suggestive as to why critical Marxism has in recent years been generally stimulated by Marxists who were not economists and by studies distant from political economy. Provocatively stated, the more one studies political economy the more one falls prey to it. What Adorno wrote of the dilemmas of the intellectual can perhaps be said of the Marxist. "Only someone who keeps himself in some measure pure has hatred, nerves, freedom and mobility enough to oppose the world, but just because of his illusion of purity...he allows the world to triumph not merely externally, but in his innermost

175. G. Lukács, "The Old Culture and the New Culture," in *Towards a New Marxism*, ed. B. Grahl and P. Piccone (St. Louis, 1973). Cf. Paul Breines, "Notes on 'The Old Culture and the New Culture'," *ibid.*, esp. pp. 13f, and in *Telos* 5 (Spring, 1970).

176. R. Luxemburg, "What is Economics?" in *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*, ed. M.A. Waters (New York, 1970), p. 245. "Marx considered that with the end of commodity production, the *political economy* born with it would *also come to an end*," L. Colletti, *From Rousseau to Lenin* (New York, 1972), p. 90. "In a socialist society, political economy will lose its *raison d'être*," N. Bukharin, *Economic Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York, 1972), p. 49.

177. Karl Korsch, *Karl Marx* (New York, 1963), p. 93.

178. K. Marx, *Poverty of Philosophy* (New York, 1963), p. 51.

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thoughts. Anyone, however, who knows business too well forgets to know it for what it is; his capacity for differentiation deserts him, and as the others are threatened by a fetishism of culture, so is he by a lapse into barbarism."[179]

If this is the general dilemma of the study and critique of political economy, these formulations leave out the more specific inquiry, questions about changes within and during the history of Marxist economics. To raise such questions is also to raise some difficult judgments. It calls for judgments about the quality, growth, decay of Marxist economics—judgments which seem very open to dispute. Luxemburg posed the question in one of her lesser known essays, "Stagnation and Progress in Marxism" (1903). She observed that "stagnation" in Marxist theory has been "noticeable for a good many years." "The actual fact is that—apart from one or two independent contributions which mark a certain theoretical advance—since the publication of the last volume of *Capital* and of the last of Engels' writings there have appeared nothing more than a few excellent popularizations and expositions of Marxist theory."

The reason Luxemburg offered to explain this situation was paradoxical, at least for a Marxist; Marxist economic theory was neglected because it was impractical to the actual working class movement. She stated somewhat ironically that the third volume of *Capital* published in 1894 made "practically no impression" on the socialist movement, and had no affect on agitation; in fact, agitation had been successful on the basis of the "incomplete" first volume. The theory 'remains unused because...it greatly transcends the needs of the working class in the matter of weapons for the daily struggle." In particular, the problems of *Capital III,* "however important from the outlook of pure theory, are comparatively unimportant from the practical outlook of the class war."[180]

Luxemburg's analysis need not be rejected out of hand, though, if true, it formalizes and accepts the divorce between economics and politics without fully questioning their damaging meaning for Marxism. After Luxemburg, others have recorded a stagnation in Marxist economics, though not interpreting it as inherent to Marxism. Mandel has periodized the contributions to Marxist economics as the most fertile, between 1894 and 1914 (Lenin, Kautsky, Luxemburg, Hilferding) and less fertile, after World War I through the early 1930s (Bukharin, Varga, Grossmann).[181] The

179. T.W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia* (London, 1974), p. 133.

180. R. Luxemburg, "Stagnation and Progress in Marxism," in *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*, pp. 108-112.

181. E. Mandel, *Marxist Economic Theory*, vol. II (New York, 1970), pp. 722-723. "Since Hilferding there hardly have been any Marxist economists of comparable rank," J. Habermas, *Theory and Practice* (Boston, 1973), p. 202. Sweezy, moreover, believes that Hilferding made no real contribution to Marxist economics after 1910 and the writing of *Das Finanzkapital*; P. Sweezy, "Introduction" to E. von Böhm-Bawerk, *Karl Marx and the Close of His System* (New York, 1949), p. xvi.

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reason there has been no third period is not hard to find; socialism in one country, and fascism in several, presented problems unforeseen by classical Marxist economics—and moreover led to the deaths of individual Marxist economists from Hilferding to Rubin. Other reasons for a decline of Marxist economics can be adduced; it has been observed that major contributions to Marxist economics have been made within the context of revolutionary surges; Lenin's *Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1899) prior to the Russian revolutions; Luxemburg's *Accumulation of Capital* (1913) on the eve of European revolution, Grossman's work prior to the socialist advances of the 1930s, etc. The recent renewal of interest in and contributions to Marxist economics can perhaps be seen as an element of renewed social antagonisms.

Korsch's observations on the decline of philosophy within Marxism are paralleled by Rosdolsky's; the weakness of Marxist economics within the Second International is inseparable from the ignorance of Hegel; the loss of dialectical thought took its toll on political economy which collapsed into mechanistic disciplines.[182] Korsch, however, is even more suggestive; he analyzed developments within Marxist economics as responding to objective developments of society. According to Korsch, the increasing accentuation on objective economic laws in Marxist economics coincides with the failure of the revolutions of 1848; that is, the change in theory registered a condition in which the subject—the proletariat—was more distant from revolutionary activity, and more under the sway of capitalist relations. The 'subjective' formula of the *Communist Manifesto* becomes the objective one of the *Critique of Political Economy*. "The history of all hitherto existing society is a history of class struggles" is rendered "the history of society is the history of material production and the contradiction between the material forces of production and the productive relations."[183] The reformulation from the subjective to objective is a "theoretical recognition" of the new and less fluid historical conditions. "The new forms of the materialist theory express the new forms of the class struggle." The class struggle can no longer solely be placed in the context of an immediate social revolution.[184]

Though Korsch has been accused of an overly schematic approach, [185] this analysis at least points to the historical substance for theoretical

182. R. Rosdolsky, "Einige Bemerkungen über die Methode des marxschen 'Kapital'," in *Kritik der politische Oekonomie heute*, ed. W. Euchner and A. Schmidt (Frankfurt, 1968), p. 10. A kindred but more general observation has been made by B. Ollman; citing Joan Robinson to the effect that the Hegel in Marx has obscured the latter's economics, Ollman stated "no one is less qualified to understand the unique contribution of Marxian economics than the economists," *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society* (Cambridge, 1971), p. 188.

183. K. Korsch, *Karl Marx*, p. 187.

184. K. Korsch, *Karl Marx*, ed. G. Langkau (Frankfurt, 1967), p. 183. (This edition contains variant texts and drafts, of which there were quite a number.) Cf. H. Marcuse, *Soviet Marxism* (New York, 1961), pp. 130f.

185. F. Cerutti, "Hegel, Lukács, Korsch," in *Aktualität und Folgen der Philosophie Hegels* (Frankfurt, 1970), ed. O. Negt, pp. 207f.

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changes. The increasing fetishism in and of Marxist economics is a response to the increasing determination of bourgeois economy. As society coalesces and freezes, so does its critique. This line of thought, which is basic to the understanding and transcendence of a narrow Marxism, is too often ignored. Recent attempts to renew the importance of the political dimension in Marxist political economy, and transcend vulgar Marxism, often possess cogent critiques of a past determinist Marxism; but they remain insufficient till they examine the historical content of such flawed Marxism. Without this historical investigation, the correction is no better, and perhaps worse; it is simply a rerun of the relative independence of a political superstructure which Engels had already declared as essential to historical materialism.

What needs to be avoided is, as it were, the vulgar critique of vulgar Marxism. The mere addition of a political-superstructure component to a political economy which has lost its politics may only yield an old pluralist formula. Arguments that Marx ignored the decisive and increasing role of politics are not only ahistorical, but ignore the reverse proposition: politics and 'life'—from consumption to leisure to the state—bear more and more the imprint of the capitalist economy, not less.[186] In this sense the domain of the economy has been increasing; and the objection against vulgar Marxism is not that it overemphasized the role of the economy, but *conceived it too narrowly*. Recent developments suggest not simply the 'politicization' of the economy, but the reverse, what Krahl called the *Oekonomisierung der Politik*.[187] For this reason, theories about the encroachment of the language of the economy into noneconomic areas can also miss the point. Such encroachment is not to be undone by a more precise conceptualization separating the two domains, for it is due to objective developments, the factual domination by the economic relations.

The fetishism that adheres both to the economy and the science of the economy goes some way in countering objections that the crisis theory is mechanistic. As noted previously, the rejection of the crisis theory in the name of subjectivity, consciousness and choice characterized a social democratic tradition; to again quote Hilferding: we are against the theory of the economic breakdown; "The overthrow of capitalism is not to be waited for fatalistically; nor will it enter from the inner laws of the system; rather the overthrow must be the conscious act of the working class." This seems kindred to a critical theory critique of mechanistic Marxism. And so it is; but within the context of economics in general, and the crisis theory in particular, it misses the dialectic. Political economy, be it *Capital* or *The Accumulation of Capital*, possesses a fatalist quality. This does not mean fatalist *political* conclusions are drawn; rather, full recognition was granted to the economics as an objective determining structure.

186. Cf. G. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness* (London, 1971), p. 193.
187. Hans-Jürgen Krahl, *Konstitution und Klassenkampf* (Frankfurt, 1971), p. 94.

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A reform tradition escaped from the 'fatalism' of the economy by casting it in an evolutionary mold, as developing towards socialism. The reification of the economy appears to be undone when the economy is not tending towards collapse and catastrophe, but towards socialism. Within this development, however, the consciousness, will, choice—subjectivity in general—that is advanced by social democracy is also well circumscribed; it is restricted to the various possibilities of reform offered by the evolutionary process. The reform critique of economic fatalism and reification in the name of subjectivity turns into its opposite; it reduces consciousness and will to appendages of the evolutionary laws. Ruling out an objective transformation ruled out a decisive role for subjectivity.

Exactly because the stress on consciousness and subjectivity abstracted from an objective transformation, has characterized a reform tradition, it was suspect to Marxists such as Mattick. "The strong emphasis on the conscious elements in the revolutionary process contains...unmistakable idealistic signs... The reformist working class movement gave up the Marxist insight into the accumulation process as a process of collapse in order to direct their attention towards the growth of socialist consciousness and socialist institutions within capitalism."[188] To state it in different terms: the purely subjective analysis of subjectivity risks turning ideological. Neither the absence nor the presence of subjectivity and consciousness is solely due to subjective factors.[189] Marcuse has noted that the usual explanation for the lack of revolutionary working class consciousness in the West—the lag of subjectivity—is "un-Marxist." This lag itself must be explained by the "objective conditions of the working class today, and only in a secondary way in their consciousness."[190]

To an important degree the affirmation of subjectivity, if it is not ideological, seems to depend on the assumption or theory of an objective collapse or transformation. Yet, the acceptance of an objective collapse can take many forms. A crisis theory can function little more than as an article of belief one acknowledges and ignores. Anchored in the present and antagonist reality, it informs the present politics. An East German and unsympathetic study of Luxemburg shed some light on the politics of the crisis theory; it noted that for Luxemburg "an automatic breakdown of capitalism was an objective necessity." This "objective necessity" was for Luxemburg the "basis for the resolution of the tactical and organizational problems...of the working class movement. Here lies the most fundamental reason for her incomprehension of the role of the party."[191] From this

188. P. Mattick, "Vorwort," to Korsch, Mattick, et al, *Zusammenbruchstheorie*... pp. 12-13.

189. For one approach concerned with the psychological dimension see "Negative Psychoanalysis and Marxism," in my *Social Amnesia* (Boston, 1975).

190. H. Marcuse, "The Movement in a New Era of Repression: An Assessment," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, XVI (1971-72), p. 4.

191. F. Oelsser, *Rosa Luxemburg* (Berlin, 1951), p. 181.

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Leninist perspective, the certitude of the collapse diminished the requirement to organize in the form of the party for it, or from this point of view, spontaneity and objective theory of the collapse co-exist.

This was, and is, essentially Mattick's position. The organization of the working class prior to the crisis and collapse necessarily reduplicates the forms of domination and reification the revolution is supposed to undo. It is worth emphasizing to what degree this position is committed both to an objective economic analysis and a new subjectivity constructed and reconstructed spontaneously during the revolutionary crisis; precisely because of its acknowledgement of the fundamental impact of the economic reality it foreswears attempts to form revolutionary parties prior to the objective disintegration. That is, organizations in and under capitalism flourish only at the expense of turning capitalist, if not in trapping, in essence. Many of the left communists, it should be noted, accepted Michels' critique and theory of the bureaucratization of the party, and concluded that only in revolutionary conditions could this bureaucratization be averted.[192] As Mattick put the dilemma: in the bourgeois era active participation in revolutionary mass organizations entails routinization and bureaucratization; but isolation from mass organizations leads to political impotence. "This dilemma can only be escaped by the spontaneous formation of revolutionary organizations, which within capitalism cannot exist. In other words, it is the spontaneous organization of the revolution itself which the dilemma of the revolution might resolve."[193]

The theory of disproportionality, the anarchy of the market, it was noted previously, not only downplayed a decisive crisis theory, but seemed to issue into the solution of state planning, state capitalism. The anarchy of the market seemed partially abolished by increasing statism. For this reason cartelization was interpreted, most notably by Hilferding, as a step or half-step towards socialism.[194] To Mattick the theory of state capitalism was proof that social democracy did not seek a transformation of society by the working class, but simply wanted to take over the existing state apparatus. They demanded a "different state or a different government, not a different economic system." Exactly for this reason there was a "relative lack of interest in the laws of crisis of capitalism."[195]

192. See Hans M. Bock, *Syndikalismus und Linkskommunismus von 1918-1923*, pp. 35f. Lukâcs' review of Michels (in *Archiv für Geschichte des Sozialismus*, XIII [1928], and *Organisation und Partei*, Raubdruck), presents the communist critique: Michels "wants to provide a general sociology of party life and gives at best a descriptive presentation of the development of opportunism in Social Democracy during the imperialist period—under the influence of the rise and growth of the working class aristocracy.... Michels does not suspect that he is really a historian of opportunism, not a sociologist of party life" (p. 309).

193. P. Mattick, "Der Leninismus und die Arbeiterbewegung des Westen," in *Lenin. Revolution und Politik* (Frankfurt, 1970), p. 11.

194. Cf. E. Mandel, *Marxist Economic Theory*, I, pp. 367-368. Engels, however, also denounced the illusion that statification was identical to socialism. Cf. M. Harrington, *Socialism* (New York, 1973), pp. 81-82.

195. P. Mattick, "Ueber den Begriff des Staatsmonopolistischen," *Ueber Karl Korsch*, p.

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Some of Horkheimer's essays from around 1940, essentially "The Authoritarian State" and "The Jews and Europe," came closest to Mattick. "Whatever seeks to extend itself under domination runs the danger of reproducing it. Insofar as the proletarian opposition in the Weimar Republic did not meet its downfall as a sect, it fell victim to the spirit of domination." "Integration is the price which individuals and groups have to pay in order to flourish under capitalism.[196] Such observations are another face of the Frankfurt School critique of positivist laws and schemes of history. These are laws of unfreedom; but retain their domination till the dominated reality changes. In this sense, the 'law' of the bureaucratization of the party is accurate, but only for the bourgeois era; when it forgets its historical nature and seeks to prefigure the future it passes into ideology. When "theory portrays the phases of bourgeois economy, bloodshed, and collapse as an immanent law of development in the transition to freedom, the notion of the self-movement of this process breaks down..."[197]

Horkheimer makes a distinction in one of his essays that is fundamental for the Frankfurt School interpretation of the collapse. "Deduceable is the economic collapse, not the revolution."[198] This returns to the Lukács of *History and Class Consciousness*; the laws of capitalism are blind and lead to crises and collapse, but not beyond. "The blind forces" "automatically" "hurdle blindly towards the abyss and only the conscious will of the proletariat will be able to save mankind from the impending catastrophe."[199] In this reading the crisis and breakdown of capitalism is as inevitable as capitalism is blind; but between the 'automatic' collapse and the reconstruction of a new socity there is only nonautomatic subjectivity, conscious will.

With these formulations the disjunction between economics and politics both decreases and increases. It decreases because the subjective and political intervention is internally linked to the objective development; it gains its emphatic meaning only within an objective context. But it increases insofar as it is uncertain what an economic collapse will bring in its wake. F. Neumann wrote, "Even if the theory of the immanent collapse were correct as an economic theory, no unambiguous political consequences would flow from it. If it were correct that the process of capitalist production must necessarily lead to the collapse of this production, this still would not mean that a political change would have to follow on the economic collapse."[200]

Horkheimer himself, and Marcuse afterwards, vacillated between two propositions which are as contradictory as reality: that the collapse was

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196. M. Horkheimer, "The Authoritarian State" (1940), *Telos*, 15 (Spring, 1973), p. 5.

197. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

198. M. Horkheimer, "Die Juden und Europa," in *Authoritärer Staat* (Amsterdam, 1968), p. 17. Cf. Horkheimer, *Dämmerung* (1934), Raubdruck, p. 66.

199. G. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, p. 70.

200. F. Neumann, *The Democratic and Authoritarian State* (New York, 1964), p. 268.

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inevitable and that collapse could be managed. "The law of its collapse is readily visible," Horkheimer wrote of state and fascist capital. "The fascist phase is. . . determined by the same economic tendencies which already have destroyed the market system. . . The eternal system of the authoritarian state, as terrible as the threat may seem, is no more real than the eternal harmony of the market system."[201] He also wrote as well, "There is no relying on the collapse of the totalitarian economy. Fascism controls the social results of the capitalist collapse." Totalitarian society is possibly "long-winded." "Collapses are not in sight."[202]

Marcuse retained these formulations; he stated in *One Dimensional Man* that the book alternated between "two contradictory hypotheses: 1) that advanced industrial society is capable of containing qualitative change for the foreseeable future, 2) that forces and tendencies exist which may break this containment and explode the society." There is no "clear answer" and further, unless there is a transformation and subversion of "consciousness and behavior of man, not even a catastrophe will bring about change."[203]

The accent is on the first hypothesis, the ability of capitalism to manage and control the contradictions. Exactly for this reason Mattick would take issue with Marcuse. Mattick is not arguing from the optimism of an inevitable proletarian revolution; more the reverse. If anything, he has approached Marcuse in his pessimism. But his formulations continue to point in another direction. "Everything is possible—even a proletarian revolution." And he continues to insist that in the long run the contradictions are not containable, that capitalist accumulation will internally break down. "The one dimensional society is such only ideologically; in every other respect it is still the capitalism of old."[204]

"There is only a chance." In this Mattick agrees with Marcuse.[205] Inevitable is "only" the breakdown. More cannot be said; political economy is objectively ambiguous; it remains imprisoned in the political economy of capitalism.

201. M. Horkheimer, "The Authoritarian State," pp. 14, 15.
202. M. Horkheimer, "Die Juden und Europa," pp. 39, 18.
203. H. Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (Boston, 1966), p. xv.
204. P. Mattick, *Critique of Marcuse* (New York, 1972), pp. 94, 101.
205. *Ibid.*, p. 107.

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Franz Kafka in Eastern Europe

by Antonin J. Liehm

An international Symposium on the life and work of Franz Kafka took place on May 27-28, 1963, at the Liblice Castle, which is owned by the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. There have been dozens of international conferences on Kafka, so this event would not be particularly significant if it were not for certain features which distinguished it from all others.

First, it was held in the country where Kafka was born and spent practically his entire life and where he remained almost unknown until 1963, not only denied a place in literature, but also refused any recognition by a society which had considered him decadent and destructive. Secondly, this was a conference of Communist Marxists, a branch of contemporary thought which had gone to a lot of trouble—and in vain—to try to make the world forget that Kafka had ever existed. Among the participants were Roger Garaudy, at that time a member of the Politbureau of the French Communist Party, and Ernst Fischer, who was then on the Central Committee of the Austrian Communist Party. The Liblice Conference was intended to be a public affirmation that, at least as far as Kafka was concerned, the Communist Marxists had been wrong. It marked their recognition of Kafka as a writer.

This in itself was an event which went beyond the framework of literature to become an important political milestone in the evolution of European political thought during the 1960s, particularly in Eastern Europe. But in one particular country—in Czechoslovakia—this conference and Franz Kafka's official rehabilitation meant a great deal more. It became one of the signals for far-reaching changes within the country's social, political and cultural structures which reached a climax during the first eight months of 1968. Almost prophetically, Roger Garaudy entitled his article about the conference in *Les Lettres Françaises*, "Prague Spring" (*Le Printemps de Prague*).

What really happened in Liblice? The whole story is full of paradoxes, comic and tragic, as paradoxes often are.

Professor Eduard Goldstücker, chairman and prime mover of the conference who was at that time head of the German Department at Charles University (and later chairman of the Czechoslovak Union of Writers), describes the origins of the Prague-Kafka paradox in this way: "Remember that the beginnings of Kafka's acceptance in our land are intimately bound up with the Communist movement. The first Czech translations of Kafka, mainly by Milena Jesenská, appeared in Czech Communist publications, edited by S.K. Neumann, from 1920 to 1924... When Kafka died the *Communist Revue* printed a short eulogy that mentioned his hatred for unjust social orders and his sympathy for the oppressed. The second phase came in

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the late 1920s and early 1930s, when he was discovered by the Catholics... The most important translation was *Metamorphosis*...[but] interest in Kafka's work was so slight that when Pavel Eisner published his translation of *The Castle* in the mid-1930s, only a few copies were sold and so the Nazis were able to destroy the bulk of the edition in 1939... After World War II—in the years of the Cold War and the almost total isolation of the socialist part of the world—the official cultural position of the socialist countries was a sharp rejection of Kafka as a decadent antirealist, as a divisive force out of place in a society intent on building socialism. And because he had become so important in the rest of the world, battles began to swirl around him and he became a weapon in the Cold War. Those who used him in this way wished to see only one side of his work, which they interpreted as the depiction of Man in a totalitarian society, as a prophetic vision of the inhuman bureaucracy ruling the socialist world. In our own country, interest in Kafka continued to be as high as in the rest of the world, even during the German occupation. It was particularly strong among graphic artists. Our graphic art inspired by Kafka, both from the viewpoint of quantity and quality, is probably unequalled in the world. From 1945 to 1948 nothing relating to Kafka was published here except for a collection of essays entitled *Kafka and Prague*, though the Petr publishing house was preparing to publish the complete works. The first volume, *Amerika*, had already been printed, but after February 1948 it had to be destroyed. And the stage was set for Kafka to become—as someone well put it—the spiritual Verdun of the time, a role that would doubtless have surprised Kafka no end. Both sides threw enormous forces at each other in this symbolic battle, and the losses on both sides were enormous. From 1948 to 1957 nothing written by or about Kafka was published, except for some indirect assaults in pamphlet form. It was only after the Twentieth Congress [of the CP of the USSR] that sporadic articles started appearing, and even then there was the feeling that these represented something forbidden or at best barely tolerated."[1]

When Jean-Paul Sartre addressed the Moscow Congress for Peace and Disarmament in July 1962, he decided to use this particular forum to speak his mind about a unity of cultures, about the need for disarmament in the cultural sphere. These were exceedingly explosive words at that time when there were constant reminders that the Cold War may have ended, but that a "relentless ideological struggle" would still go on. Sartre told the Congress: "...Our guilt is great. We have all these many sins on our conscience because we are living at a time when culture is used as a weapon. This is not an apology, but an explanation. Understand, some politicians do it consciously,

1. In A.J. Liehm, *The Politics of Culture* (New York, 1968), pp. 280-283.

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others act under pressure of objective forces which they do not even realize. But culture has already changed; the fortifications and war paths exist. In brief, culture has become a matter of military strategy and tactics... During the Cold War, these tactics were used to separate a work of art into two parts—the 'universal' and the 'specific,' which were then pitted against each other. Instead of the dialectic approach which transforms the specific into the universal, a culture, when it is at war, starts by stressing its own singularities—identifying itself as either Graeco-Roman, European or Western. Then it proclaims these singularities as nothing less than universal for the simple reason that only one single culture exists and anything else is barbarism. This is the same as rejecting universality in the name of universality. This is the way bourgeois humanism can afford to be both racist and humanistic at the same time. All people are brothers, they declare, adding that of course, only the bourgeoisie are people. This is the starting point in the process of distorting masterpieces with the aid of a venal press and critics. Take Kafka, for example. This brilliant author was Jewish. He was tortured by the fate of the Jewish community in Prague during the Hapsburg reign and during the early years of the bourgeois Czechoslovak Republic. Gnawed by family conflicts and religious disagreements, the testimony he left us is all the more universal because it is so deeply individual. But what have our critics done? From the way they have described his books, one would think they were hoping they would explode in the hands of Russian readers. They started insisting that bureaucracy is an inevitable sin of socialism—as though this weren't one of the vices of every industrialized society. Then they identified Kafka as an author who derided and exposed bureaucrats. After such an introduction, all they needed to do was to ship him off to the Russians, in hopes that now everybody would recognize their own country when they'd read *The Trial*. It wouldn't have mattered so much if this deliberately aggressive attitude had not called forth a defensive response which, no matter how understandable in itself, was belligerent: Well, if these books are supposed to offend us, then we needn't translate them! The result? Almost half a century has passed since *The Trial* was written and many people in a country which stands in the forefront of social, scientific and technical progress, have never even heard of Kafka. Thus, a double injustice has been committed against this author. In the West, he is distorted and misconstrued and in the East, he is passed over in silence. And all of us, no matter where we live, suffer by this injustice which we are doing to him. In East and West alike, we are wronging Kafka by our partisan passions and nowhere do we have the benefit of his real universality. That is, from his values which everybody can acquire if we would just let them mature and ripen in our minds and hearts—without adding anything extraneous, as Marx once said in quite different circumstances... When Mr. Krushchev spoke of peaceful coexistence of different systems, he rightly pointed out that there can be such

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coexistence in any sphere, but it must be peaceful. By applying this to culture, I have come to the conclusion that it must imply competition too. That in every individual case, its synthetic unity means to compete, and I believe that Marxism would end up by having the advantage. But let's go back to Kafka. Here we have an example of real cultural competition. I asked one of my Soviet friends why they hadn't translated any of his books. The man replied that they would soon start publishing his shorter writings, but that I must understand that Western critics had distorted Kafka so much that to many Russians, he sounded like their bitterest enemy. Then I asked: But why haven't you yourselves written a critical Marxist study on Kafka and gotten him on your side? You'd probably win your point, because your methods for interpreting an author and his works are more advanced than the methods of Western critics. Or rather, these methods get you farther, once you extract the truths which they contain, ignoring the constantly reiterated lies. Briefly, cultural competition means breaking through the customs barriers and other obstacles, then issuing this peaceful challenge: To whom does Kafka belong, you or us? Which of us understands him better? And for whom is he most helpful?... Culture doesn't need to be defended, either by soldiers or politicians. Those who claim to be defending it are in reality, defending war whether they want to or not. If the soldiers of imperialism defend the Parthenon, then the Parthenon is really being defended by imperialism. Culture doesn't have to be protected. All it asks of us intellectuals—and this is our duty—is to demilitarize it..."

Did Sartre really mean what he said? Perhaps not literally and perhaps not every word (which had to be chosen then with extreme care). Don't forget that he was speaking in Russia, under very sensitive circumstances, in the context of a struggle which was going on to move one step closer toward cultural de-Stalinization. He wanted to do something that was practically impossible. But basically, yes—I think he meant what he said. Let's not forget how much hope was bound up with the whole Krushchev era. Many of these hopes were actually fulfilled and in many ways, Stalin would not recognize the Soviet Union if he would see it today. But one hope remained unfulfilled: that the USSR would, in fact, become a big, living laboratory for modern social thinking, based on Marx. That it would become a country in which Kafka would not have the impact which he cannot help but have in any totalitarian, bureaucratized society which is wrapped in the fog of its own misconceptions.

But by this speech, Sartre undoubtedly gave Kafka valid credentials which opened—or half-opened, anyway—the door for him into "socialist society." This was all that was needed. Even in Russia, the speech brought results and in Prague, it was decisively important—for the very fact that these things had been said and the way they were said and where and when the speech was given. And because it had been greeted with such tumultuous applause by such a gathering.

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Sartre's address was not published in the USSR, of course. It was brought to Prague by a member of the Czechoslovak delegation, Sartre's friend, artist and author Adolf Hoffmeister.

A translators' conference was held in Prague in the autumn of 1962 which was supposed to do exactly the opposite of what Sartre had called for. It was supposed to proclaim the irreconcilable differences between Eastern and Western cultures, to call for vigilance against cultural infiltration and for ideological purity among those who were the main instrument of integration —the translators.

As was so often the case, though, this intention may have corresponded to what was going on at that time in Moscow where there had been a stiffening on the ideological and cultural fronts. But it certainly did not correspond with the situation in Czechoslovakia and in its cultural life where changes were being belatedly made, changes which had been made much earlier in some other countries. When the full text of Sartre's Moscow speech was read at the translators' conference (it later appeared in the Czech press), the whole course and purpose of the meeting suddenly changed. Actually, it was from here that the signal was given for a further relaxation in publishing policies and for more intensive efforts to establish contacts abroad and to heal the gaps caused by years of isolation. Franz Kafka and his work had a quite special role in this whole purpose.

The Liblice Conference on Kafka was, as the Polish critic Roman Karst recalls, originally planned as a meeting of Czechoslovak and Soviet literary critics and theoreticians. They went ahead cautiously, because the ground was shaky. Sartre's words did not go unheeded even in the USSR and it looked as though the time had come in Moscow too for a reevaluation of Kafka. But when the "summit meeting" had been approved in principle, the initiators decided to open the door a little wider. This was when the idea was put forward and "passed" to invite all Eastern European countries to send representatives. Certain suspicions were aroused in Moscow, but nobody said anything.

It was around that time that Roger Garaudy published *D'un Realisme sans Rivage*, composed of three essays on St. John Perse, Picasso and Kafka. We must not forget that by his membership in the French Politbureau, Garaudy was officially the top ideologist in the second largest Communist Party of Western Europe. It was impossible to say that realism is only one of many possible directions, but being an official Marxist, a sophisticated scholar and art theoretician, Garaudy realized that the canonization of realism (not to mention socialist realism) had become a ridiculous anachronism. So he tried a bit of daring sophistry. Roughly, his conclusion was that all real art is realistic. (Such sophistry seems superfluous only where it is not a necessity.) But the fact is that this is the way Garaudy reopened within Communist

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Marxism the door to 20th century art (and much more than that) which Stalinism had slammed shut in the early 1930s.

About that time, early in 1963, I was attending an international congress in Nice and Garaudy came. He was to give a lecture. We met in his room at the Hotel Negresco, which was like something out of Kafka. A large part of the hotel was occupied then by some Arab prince, his wives and entourage, so the gold and scarlet Art Nouveau salons were full of people in white burnooses gliding to and fro. Garaudy and I talked until far into the night and next day. As a result, the next day a letter was on its way to Prague, addressed to the organizers of the Kafka conference, signalling Garaudy's interest in attending. How could they turn down a member of the Politbureau of the French Communist Party? When similar interest was expressed by Ernst Fischer, another leading representative of European Communist Marxism, the final shape of the Liblice Conference was determined.

The only country which eventually did not send any representatives was the USSR.

Among the speakers at Liblice was Roman Karst, the Polish critic and German scholar, who was at that time deputy editor-in-chief of the Warsaw literary review, *Tworczosc*. He titled his lecture "An Attempt at Man's Salvation" and in it he said: "Kafka's parables destroy his heroes' illusions and their mistaken faith that they are living in a free and rational world which is governed by moral principles. On every side, we hear tragic outcries against this era of lies and half-truths, laments about how history has failed, exhortations to lead a new kind of life. Kafka is an author of infinite negation, but certainly not of capitulation... His work is a tragic attempt at man's salvation, stemming from a humble love of life, from a realization of man's social nature as the highest point of our existence and from a sense of responsibility for the good and evil in mankind. Kafka is a poet of absurd responsibility. Man, he proclaims, is responsible not only for himself, but for everything around him, for his society and for the whole world. Josef K. is 'personally' innocent, but he does not realize that he is also responsible for whatever exists 'outside of himself.' And this is the crime for which he must do penance. Perhaps what makes all Kafka's characters so tragic is that they go through the world with an immense burden of responsibility on their shoulders. No one, Kafka says, can release you from this burden and you yourself cannot get rid of it..."

Karst's own path resembles that of a Kafka character. It is not unlike that of Goldstücker or, in a way, of Garaudy and Fischer and many others—the melancholy, intellectual "heroes of our time." Karst is a Jew from a country where, during the 1930s, the Communists were the only political party which would accept a Jew as a member. Poland's defeat in 1939 found him—"luckily"—in that part of the country which was occupied by the Soviet Army. And Stalin immediately shipped him off to Siberia for seven years.

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Miraculously, he survived, returned to Warsaw after the war, joined the Social Democratic Party and became a Communist when the two parties merged. In 1968, he was a warm supporter of the "Prague Spring" and of the Polish students who were staging their own demonstrations at that time, during which his daughter Bronia was arrested. She spent several months in jail. He himself was officially recalled, fired from his teaching post at the university during the wave of anti-semitism, and hounded by the police until finally he and his daughter were literally forced to emigrate. In 1969, he became full professor of German at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. We had prepared this conversation for a long time and it lasted several days. It began with a statement rather than with a question: *"It's been ten years..."*

Karst: —I didn't realize it's been so long. So much has changed since then. In Poland, and in Czechoslovakia. There have been a lot of personal changes, too.

Today I wonder whether that conference in Liblice is just a memory or whether it is something which is still alive, something which belongs to the present. And I tell myself that this isn't just an episode out of the distant past. Those who opposed the conference still have it on their conscience. It gives them nightmares. And for those who initiated and supported it, Liblice remains a symbol of hopes which may not yet have been fulfilled, but which have never really died.

In 1963, the Kafka conference was not just a literary event, it was also political. It is generally recognized that there are many quite different opinions about the basic philosophy behind his works. Some commentators, among them Max Brod in particular, consider that Kafka expresses hope and faith in man's destiny and his adaptability in the interest of a positive idea. At the other extreme are those Kafka scholars, mostly Americans together with a few Germans and French, who claim that Kafka is a tragic poet of man's alienation who is telling us that all man's attempts to change human destiny are doomed to failure. Then there are those who seek a compromise between these two extremes.

Personally, I'm not too much concerned about whether to interpret Kafka as a spokesman of hope or hopelessness. I am not so much concerned about whether Kafka believes in the possibility of changing human life or not. What fascinates me, rather, is the fact that he has made all his characters strive for such changes. Kafka writes dynamic prose. His characters are active. There is never a moment's rest for them. In comparison with Proust whose writings are contemplative (Proust's characters do not *create* their past, no matter how much they remember it), Kafka is active. The congenital sin of his characters is not their lack of faith or an insufficiency of hope, but simply inactivity, resignation and not enough determination to act. On the other hand, their highest virtue is being active, in constantly striving for some goal. Paradoxically, Kafka's characters are maniacs, demons of action and concentrated

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energy. For example, the action in *The Castle* is a constant eruption of dynamic forces in man. At times it takes on a passive character which deceives many critics, luring them into unlikely speculations. Take for example the short story, "Vor dem Gesetz" ("Before the Law"). It is the story of an anonymous man. One day this farmer comes upon a cottage where Righteousness dwells. There he stands, nameless, in front of the door to the room where Righteousness lives, but the doorkeeper refuses to let him enter. He insists that a farmer may call on Righteousness only at certain specified times. Neither the farmer nor the doorman knows when that time will come or even if it ever will. So the farmer waits for the rest of his life and the suffering he endures while waiting simply hastens his death... The critics have let their imaginations run wild, pondering and speculating why the man waited so persistently, why he didn't show more intiative, why he didn't force his way into the presence of Righteousness. I have the feeling that this misses the whole point of the story. Despite his passivity, the farmer is a maniac, a dynamo of action. Even though he doesn't do anything except spend the rest of his life outside the door of Righteousness, his activity consists in devoting his entire life to attaining a certain goal—to being admitted into the presence of Righteousness. Gradually the past drops out of his life, along with all his memories and traditions and obligations to friends and family until finally he is able to concentrate all his energies single-mindedly on this goal which has become so all-engrossing.

We must also consider the setting of his story. The farmer is confined within a little room, surrounded by four walls, a door and the doorman. A gigantic duel goes on between him and the doorman. It is man's existence which is at stake—and metaphorically, the destiny of the world. This duel continues through his whole lifetime. And it demands—besides a static situation—exceptional internal dynamism and energy.

This is what leads me to the conclusion that Kafka's work is the antithesis of impressionistic literature, that it leads man away from passivity and faith into the field of action. Man must find his direction, he must aim toward some goal, regardless of whether it is attainable or not. It is true that the majority of Kafka's heroes never attain their goal. But that is not what matters. It is the steady, consistent striving toward a goal which counts.

I might add that Kafka himself might have defined the goal differently in different circumstances at different periods of time and in different countries. Around 1961, an article appeared in a Warsaw magazine in which the author devoted one hundred pages to quite seriously proving that socialism was the secret of the Castle which so intrigued the Surveyor. To this day I do not know whether this author was being serious or whether he was just trying to make Kafka more palatable in the East.—

Liehm:—In Czechoslovakia, the same sort of thing was tried by making out Kafka to be a prophet of Nazism and of a world which is ruled by terror.—

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Karst: —I still remember a similar attempt which was made at the Liblice Conference, although in a somewhat more elegant form. Using the first Czech edition of *Amerika* as evidence, one of the speakers attempted to show that, in a way, Kafka had written an epic of a worker's fate. I spoke out against this thesis then. To force Kafka into a socialist mold is a disservice both to Kafka and to socialism.—

Liehm: —This put you on the other side of the political fence at Liblice.—

Karst: —The whole political problem was *Kafka's acceptance in the East.* A great deal has already been written about this so probably it is only some of the circumstances and personal observations which are interesting for us now. First, we must realize that Kafka was accepted in different East European countries in different ways, at different times and to differing degrees. In two countries, this evolution was very interesting and in Kafka's homeland, it was quite dramatic. The whole affair passed quietly in the USSR and its reconciliation with Kafka was fundamentally negative from the start. In the German Democratic Republic, they made a virtue out of necessity: they allowed Kafka into the living room but they made him stand in the corner. It was different in Hungary. While it was the "people" who opened the door for Kafka in Poland and Czechoslovakia, he was declared *salonfähig* in Budapest from "above." In other words, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party decided that the time had come to liberalize their cultural policy and Kafka got the benefit of their decision. This was around 1964 and the Hungarian situation at that time was an interesting compromise between the Soviet position and what developed later in Czechoslovakia and Poland.

It was in Poland where the door was first opened for Kafka as a consequence of October 1956 and the events which went before. As it turned out later, this was a phase of dreams which never came true. When Gomulka took over, many Polish intellectuals—and I was among them—naively welcomed his promise for a change in the direction of greater democratization and freedom. This was an illusion, of course. October 1956 did not mark the beginning of liberalization but its end. A fresh wind had been blowing in Poland from 1954 to 1956. There was an *interregnum* in the Party, the old government was weak and rotten, having lost its vitality, and a new one had not yet been consolidated. During those years, Poland had the freest press in Eastern Europe and had excellent satirical theaters. People stopped listening to Radio Free Europe because they could get objective news about Poland and the rest of the world in the Polish press and radio. October 1956 marked the beginning of the formation of a new government. This process lasted for several years which *via facti* prolonged the agony of liberalism. Gomulka, who was fundamentally a dogmatist and autocrat, was still not strong enough to crack down on liberal opposition within the Party and among the intellectuals. But even then, at the very beginning, he took several steps which were definitive for him. He stopped the publication of *Po Prostu* (*Simply*

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Speaking), the country's best magazine articulating the views of the new generation, and he got rid of some of the "most dangerous" liberals within the Party. The period of "closing one's eye" to liberalism lasted only until 1962. Then things went so far that when the reform wave finally came to Czechoslovakia, the Polish Communist Party was its bitter opponent. So it is not surprising that when in desperation, Polish students and intellectuals made up their minds to defend their freedom in March 1968, their attempts were harshly suppressed. The comrades in Moscow didn't need to worry about Warsaw. Gomulka and his friend Moezar had already accomplished in Poland what it took tanks to do in Prague.

But let's get back to Kafka. His acceptance in Poland was conditioned on one hand by prewar evolution in Polish literature, and on the other, by postwar political developments. Kafka really emerged out of a world which had almost been forgotten since 1945. He had not been entirely unknown in Poland between the two world wars, of course. I found an article about him in a 1927 issue of *Wiadomosci Literackie*, a leading Warsaw journal. Kafka had his admirers in Polish literary circles. The most distinguished among them was Bruno Schulz to whom we are indebted for his sensitive translation of *The Trial* which was published in the 1930s. Schulz, one of the greatest Polish literary talents of that decade, was influenced by Kafka, but he succeeded in resisting being submerged by him. Actually, Kafka is a very dangerous author in the sense that he threatens to destroy all his admirers who do not succeed in defending their own independence. Bruno Schulz had too strong a literary personality to be able to ignore Kafka, but he was also too strong an individual to subordinate himself to Kafka.

In prewar Poland, there was a vigorous avant garde movement which was conducive to an interest in Kafka. Among the members of this movement were authors like S.I. Witkiewicz, Schulz and Withold Gombrowicz who represent three different artistic trends. All, like Kafka himself, were seeking new paths and new modes of expression. Personally, I think Kafka and Gombrowicz have a lot in common, although the world which took tragic forms in Kafka's fantasy was transformed into the grotesque in Gombrowicz's imagination.

I could give other examples, but it is enough if we say that the prewar literary evolution facilitated Kafka's acceptance in Poland and assured him a readership which understood what he was trying to say. This natural process of rapprochement was interrupted by the war and, after that, by the Stalin era which made Polish intellectual life so barren.

Beginning with 1955, doors were opened in Poland to Western authors and eventually to Kafka, too. Gradually, translations of all his works appeared along with a considerable amount of critical writings about him. My own book, *Paths of Loneliness*, came out in 1960. If I am not mistaken, it was the first in the Eastern bloc. Something almost amounting to a Kafkamania

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developed. After 1965, I was a member of the editorial board of *Tworczoscz*, where day after day, young authors kept bringing their short stories which showed a very strong Kafka influence.

I have the feeling that the interest in Kafka has not waned to this day. The Polish Party leadership did not think there was any point in restricting the publication of Kafka's works. On the contrary, it favored all literature which did not deal with politics directly, and it continues to do so. Extremely experimental poetry enjoys the greatest sympathy among those who shape cultural policies in Poland today. The less communicative it is, the better. So, in conclusion, Kafka never became a really political figure for Poland.—

Liehm:—And in the Soviet Union?—

Karst:—There Kafka had a more difficult time. The Krushchev era stimulated more interest in this author who was practically unknown in Russia, and this resulted in an anthology which was published in 1965 and entitled *F. Kafka—Novels, Stories and Parables.* As far as I know, this is all that has been published from Kafka in the USSR and in any case, it is the most extensive collection in Russian. Previously, Kafka had been read only in very limited circles, by those who could read him in German, French or English. The volume I mentioned is interesting by the very fact of its publication but also because of the way it was compiled. It is a perfect reflection of the official cultural line toward Kafka. It came out after Krushchev's fall, but it was compiled and translated much earlier, between 1963-64.

It offers a relatively wide choice, containing the full text of *The Trial* and most of his better-known stories and parables. But the most interesting thing about it is the introduction by B. Suchkov. He is apparently a decent sort of critic, but what he has written in this prologue is somewhat of a literary curiosity.

The purpose of such introductions is usually to stimulate the reader's interest in what follows. Suchkov did not do this. For almost sixty pages, he warns the reader about Kafka. It is one big attack. He finds Kafka guilty of seven cardinal sins which he enumerates: ignoring literary conventions, pessimism, distracting the reader's attention from basic social problems, nihilism, wallowing in despondency, passivity and alienation. Then, at the very end, Suchkov performs an unexpected somersault and declares that nevertheless, Kafka is worth reading because he is a great artist. Of course, it is hard to judge how much of his argument stems from real conviction, how much is simple conformity or whether it is a prudent guise for smuggling in some contraband.

Soviet disapproval of Kafka was made quite clear during preparations for the Liblice Conference which, as it turned out, was really an illegitimate offspring of the original plan (a bilateral Czechoslovakia-Soviet meeting). Moscow promised to send four or five participants but a few days before the conference started, a telegram arrived saying that only one person would be

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coming. I believe it was to have been the critic, A.A. Anisimov. In the end, he didn't come either.

But let's get back to the anthology. Soviet books usually mention how many copies of it have been published. This time, the information was missing, an indication that the edition was probably very small. In other words, prohibited. I know that when many Soviet writers came to Warsaw, they always tried to find a copy of this collection. I donated my own copy to one of them. This was common practice in Poland, too. My book on Kafka was published in 1,750 copies and was sold out within three days. Because of the interest in an unknown theme. Before the book came out, the director of the Central Publishing Board asked me: "Who has anything to gain from a book about Kafka?" The number of copies published was fixed so that there were not enough even for those who were really interested.

The Soviet anthology was published more for reasons of prestige than because the Russians were acknowledging Kafka's place in literature. It was simply a matter of erasing a blemish: the fact that Kafka had never been published in Russian. The Soviet objections were both literary and political, like the arguments on Kafka always are. To this day, the so-called socialist realist approach to the arts prevails in the USSR. This is the only recognized artistic method. Any rapprochement between Kafka and this kind of writing is impossible, of course, even if we'd stand on our heads. Don't forget that Kafka's acceptance in Poland was due to what had happened around October 1956. In Czechoslovakia, it was due to a powerful revival in socialist thinking. To admit Kafka into Soviet literary consciousness would mean recognizing either openly or covertly the existence of a plurality, in literature at least. The first moves toward recognizing Kafka in the USSR came during the wane of the Krushchev era. But they never amounted to much because cultural policy froze up again as soon as Krushchev disappeared from the scene.—

Liehm:—How do you explain this allergy to Kafka? Why not to Joyce, for instance?—

Karst:—We must not exaggerate the problem of Kafka in Russia. He was never as important to the Russians as he was to the Czechs or to the Germans. I don't know whether there is a complete translation of *Ulysses* in Russian, but I do know that there is a general tendency to translate primarily those foreign authors who are felt, in Soviet opinion, to be socially "progressive"—writers like Laxness, Pablo Neruda and Howard Fast, until he became a heretic. Or else, those who could be called "realists," like Hemingway, Böll, Steinbeck, Caldwell, Martin du Gard, Moravia and the like. Kafka doesn't fit in either category. In addition, there is something else which plays its part. In Kafka's works, every sensitive reader can feel the revulsion against totalitarian attitudes, against manipulation and mystification, against totalitarianism in general. Kafka often expressed this revulsion in conversations with his friends. I remember what he once said to Gustav Janouch (even then he had misgivings about the bureaucratic sequel of revolutionary movements): "Some

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kind of a Napoleon always emerges at the end of every revolution... The farther a flooding river overflows its banks, the dirtier and muddier its waters become. The revolution dries up too and all that's left is the mud of a new bureaucracy. The shackles of tormented humanity are made of typing paper... Secretaries, clerks and professional politicians now stand behind the workers who once were masters of the streets and who paved the way to power for these modern sultans..."—

Liehm:—The third country where Kafka has had a strange fate is the German Democratic Republic...—

Karst:—Kafka's story in the GDR is so full of paradoxes that it's hard to believe. Until the Liblice Conference, one of the greatest writers in the German language was virtually unknown in that country. I was often told that the attitude of the West German publisher who owned his rights was a major obstacle to publishing Kafka in the GDR, along with his insistence that Kafka be published with Max Brod's introduction. This was rejected by the GDR. But it was all just part of the truth. Later, when the East Germans finally decided to publish Kafka after all, a way was found to get around all the obstacles. Kafka was simply a bogey man. They were terrified by him. So much so that something very peculiar happened which came to light during the Liblice Conference. The East Germans tried to use Thomas Mann to fight Kafka. They made Mann a symbol of progressive bourgeois literature acceptable to the working class and turned Kafka into a negative symbol of bourgeois art who represented a great danger for the working class. This artificial antithesis always puzzled me. Why did they favor Mann, who had always been strongly influenced by Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Wagner? Why Mann, the author of *Dr. Faustus*, one of the most pessimistic novels of the 20th century, which prophesizes the end of art and cultural and humanistic thought? Why had they picked on Mann as being so good for the working class? Why should Kafka be poison for the proletariat—the author of "In der Strafkolonie" ("The Penal Colony"), the prophet of the tragedy into which man is pushed by a totalitarian system, an author who has so convincingly described man's struggle for the victory of the true and the good? The Mann-Kafka comparison was the main theme of the GDR delegation's remarks at Liblice.

But I'd like to go back a bit. The biggest paradox was really of comic proportions—if you can speak of comedy in such sad circumstances. Not a single work of Kafka's had ever been published in the German Democratic Republic—not even a single short story or parable—but suddenly, within a short space of time, two books about Kafka appeared. In 1961, it was *Kafka—Weltbild und Roman* by Klaus Hermsdorf and one year later, *Franz Kafka—Werk und Entwurf,* compiled by Helmut Richter. The East German reader thus found himself in a peculiar situation. He could read critical analyses about a German author whose works were inaccessible.

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Both Hermsdorf and Richter were in Liblice and presented the official GDR line, which they had also defended in their books. It was negative. It would be unfair to put their work on a par with Suchkov's introduction and I have no intention of doing so. Both of these East German authors are intelligent critics and literary historians and in addition to their naive and vulgar sociological formulations, they also advanced some interesting ideas.

But it was only after the Liblice Conference that the importance which the GDR attached to Kafka was fully revealed. Two "fronts" had formed. One, "pro-Kafka," included representatives of many different types of literature and many countries. The GDR delegates were the only ones on the other side of the barricades. Their situation was very difficult, of course. I asked one of them quite frankly: "How can you talk such nonsense?" He glanced around him, then hinted that he could not speak freely... There was a high-ranking member of the SED (East German Communist Party) among the delegation who kept tabs on everybody and gave them orders.

The conference had the greatest repercussions in two countries: in Czechoslovakia in a positive sense and negatively, in the German Democratic Republic. The Kafka battle was part of a whole struggle for a revival of society and culture. In the GDR, it was part of the fight to preserve old Stalinist and neo-Stalinist cultural policies. After the demonstrations of East Berlin workers in 1953, Walter Ulbricht complained that the German people had disappointed him. At that time Bertolt Brecht suggested ironically that he should get himself different people. Alfred Kurella apparently had decided to take Brecht's advice now. Kurella was the spokesman of East German cultural policy in the field of literature. He had come to the conclusion that most of what was being written in East Germany was disappointing for the Party. So he determined himself to find a new kind of literature, uninfected by the taint of Kafka. Kurella's polemics with Garaudy, Goldstücker, Fischer and Reiman are well known and there is no point in going back over it again. I would simply like to point out that Kafka became an important factor in the polarization process. That was important and it still is. The dividing line between the cultural fronts in Eastern Europe became much sharper and attitudes toward Kafka forecast cultural and political developments in these countries for years to come. The fronts were drawn up just as they had been at Liblice. The Czechs, Slovaks and leading Western Communist Marxists were on one side. Everybody else was in the other camp.

The Liblice Conference also found a negative response among the pro-Gomulka, pro-regime critics in Poland and when I published an account of the conference's discussions, they all backed the GDR position. But the overwhelming majority of Polish intellectuals deplored the attacks on Kafka. As for the Russians, they did not even take part in the discussion. They hadn't published anything by Kafka before Liblice and they refused to publish him

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afterwards, too. The above-mentioned anthology was just a brief and "semi-legal" episode. But the East Germans simply couldn't ignore Kafka and pretend that nothing had ever happened. He was a German writer of too great a stature to be silenced, particularly by second-rate literature. And this led to a paradoxical situation. They finally published Kafka and rejected him at the same time. They acknowledge him artistically but condemned him ideologically—as though an author can be split asunder from what he has written.

East German politicians had an easier job with Thomas Mann. That was because almost all of his work was turned toward the past. *Buddenbrooks* was set in the 19th century, *Lotte in Weimar* went back even farther, not to mention his Joseph trilogy. Even his most contemporary work, *Dr. Faustus*, ends with World War Two. Besides, Mann limits his subject matter to the spiritual world of the bourgeoisie and intellectuals.

In comparison, Kafka's work has a universal frame. It cannot be limited in time, since it reaches back into the past, through the present and far ahead into the future. Its range is unlimited, touching on every facet of human existence. In a social sense, Kafka's work cannot be reduced to any clearly defined milieu. His stories and novels take place everywhere and nowhere and at any period of history. They have everything in them and nothing, and they are about Everyman, no matter where or when or how he lives.

So each phenomenon which Kafka describes somehow has to do with the present and the existing social situation. It is impossible to say about him: "What he has written has nothing to do with us, with our times and our problems." Unlike Thomas Mann, Kafka cannot be mummified and made into a "classic." You can't turn him into a marble bust. We must somehow come to terms with him, either accepting or rejecting him. In my opinion, these are the basic reasons for the bitter polemics which built up into such a sharp conflict between the East Germans and liberal forces in other East European countries.—

Liehm:—The Mann-Kafka comparison was not just an instrument of East German cultural policy, of course. We find it first in Lukács.—

Karst:—It is true that Lukács was repudiated and sharply attacked in the GDR in 1956, but they still accepted his evaluation of Thomas Mann and Kafka. Personally, I think Lukács took a deplorable stand against Kafka in his book, *Wider den missverstandenen Realismus*. I discussed it with him myself on several occasions, for the last time in Budapest in 1962. Then he already had certain doubts about it himself, although fundamentally he stuck to his position. His whole concept of realistic literature was built on the grandeur of nineteenth century French classical literature (Balzac, Stendhal) and German writing of the second half of the nineteenth century (Keller, Meyer, Storm, Fontane, Raabe). Even though Lukács was later critical of dogmatic, doctrinaire socialist realism, he remained loyal to the classical

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structure of realism. So it is not surprising that he rejected Brecht in the realm of drama and, in prose, he had no room for Kafka. Not just Kafka, either. Modern writing, from Joyce to Camus to the "new novel," had no place in Lukács' map of world literature. So it is only natural that Mann's structure and concept of the novel fit right in with Lukács' theory. Kafka's writings, according to him, were too dense, too tightly-knit. Mann's novels marked the end of an era, the final fruit of a long and magnificent evolution. In comparison, Kafka's prose ushered in a new world and a new concept of literature. It is, in effect, a new kind of literature which did not fit into the tradition of the 19th century novel. In order to accept it, we must either expand our old concept of realism—which is what Garaudy and Fischer tried to do—or else abandon it entirely.—

Liehm:—What do you think about contemporary Kafka criticism?—

Karst:—You could build a whole library of books by and about Kafka. Today, fifty years after his death, a complete bibliography of critical literature, including shorter works as well, would certainly amount to hundreds of volumes. There is probably no other about whom there are so many different opinions. This is natural. Kafka's work is enigmatic, ambiguous, obscure and often hard to understand. Commentaries of his work are many and far-reaching and all the different interpretations comprise an impenetrable jungle through which it is very difficult to hack one's way. Kafka himself didn't make things any easier for his readers and critics. He left no commentaries about what he had written. On the contrary, he seemed to do all he could to conceal its meaning.

But I don't think this wide variety of interpretations is the main problem of Kafka exegesis. It is rather a matter of method. Usually, the chief sin is over-interpretation. The critic not only faces the task of deciphering the mysteries of what Kafka has written, but also—and perhaps this is even more important today—he must clear away the underbrush of error and confusion perpetrated by the critics. There are mountains of misunderstandings which must be moved. The primary evil, in my opinion, is a tendency to turn every detail into a symbol. It is a prevalent opinion that there are hidden meanings crouched behind almost every word Kafka wrote, in every detail and metaphor. For instance, I know of one book in which the author analyzes and interprets every detail in *The Castle*. For example, the Surveyor spends his time in two taverns and in this monograph, the critic sees one of them as a symbol of the Catholic Church and the other, Protestant... Some other critics seek a symbol in every coat button. Sometimes I have the feeling that things have gone so far that some of these critical interpretations of Kafka have become almost like those dream books that used to be printed on cheap paper and peddled at fairs and carnivals in Poland. They always had an explanation for anything you might have dreamed about the night before, telling you what it really meant.

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We know that Kafka wanted all his manuscripts to be burned after his death. He also expressed the wish that, with very few exceptions, what had already been published should not be republished. Sometimes I think he must have felt this way because of a clairvoyant fear of critics and commentators.

So, today, I think the "Kafka problem" is basically just how far we can go with interpretation and what it can do.—

Liehm:—What do you think?—

Karst:—I've already said what I think about Kafka and explained it in several books. I'd just like to add a few personal remarks. First, about how I got acquainted with Kafka. I had read *The Castle* and several of his short stories before the war, but I must admit that, for various reasons, they had not made a great impression on me. But then I read him again at the end of the 1940s. At that time, it was very difficult to obtain the German texts, but finally I succeeded. For me, reading him was a literally shattering experience. There were two reasons. One was the work itself. I read Kafka intensly during the Stalin era which had made me extremely sensitive to everything I read by him. It is hard to rule on how a certain writer should be read. Yet, I have the feeling that in a world whose realities were more and more approximating Kafka's own metaphors and images, Kafka is accepted in quite a different way than in a world where reading him is primarily an aesthetic experience. A reader from the first mentioned world feels much more emotional about Kafka, while another reader can afford to be more rational and objective. Kafka has an absolutely explosive effect for anyone who lives in a world that is founded on untruth and lack of freedom. That is probably the first reason why his writings fascinated me so.

As a critic, Kafka impressed me because he was so enigmatic. Man is intrigued by every puzzle and tempted to try to decipher it. This is especially true of those puzzles which have to do with one's own existence and human life in general. That is why Kafka is so fascinating for the critic and for the reader: he forces you to take an active part, as a reader. He belongs to that school of modern literature which does not answer questions, but asks them instead, reminding us at the same time that it will be hard to find an answer. The reader and critic are forced to work together to overcome all the obstacles which the author has erected. It has often been claimed that Kafka rebuffs his readers, that he has built walls around himself to discourage any access to his inner meaning. But this is only half true. He gently tells his reader that he should not keep trying so hard to solve mysteries, but weave on with the threads of his own imagination. Kafka never made things easy for his reader yet he wrote in order to be read. In this sense, he is incomparable. That is another reason why, as a critic, I have found Kafka so intriguing.—

Liehm:—You've said that Kafka marked the beginning of an era. Why?—

Karst:—When he was describing how he wrote *Dr. Faustus*, Thomas Mann said that only something that is not really a novel at all, can be considered as a

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novel today. Nevertheless, for as long as he lived, Mann went on writing traditional, epic novels of the old style.

Kafka blazed new trails instead. His prose is revolutionary, parabolic, anti-epic and anti-psychological. He has built a world out of familiar details described with naturalistic precision, but which at the same time represent something new and different. The world does not depend on time, on conventional concepts of space, movement, gorgeous colors and descriptive psychology. The heroes of *The Trial* and *The Castle* are, generally speaking, not psychological units. The heroes of the classic novel strive for love, for power, riches or glory. This is all psychological. In *The Trial* and *The Castle*, each gentleman has a single aim: one of them wants to enter the castle, the other wants to prove his innocence. The women who appear have nothing to do with love or sex; their main interest too is in attaining a final goal. Frieda is an example in *The Castle*. Kafka is not so much interested in his characters psychologically, but rather in whether or not they have a goal. They are really just problems with human faces. Kafka even goes so far that some of the heroes of his stories are not human beings at all, but animals—an ape, for instance, or even a wooden mannikin. Of course this does not mean that they cannot be interpreted psychologically.

Despite the unrealistic character of his writing, it breathes with the spirit of our times. Despite their bizarreness, Kafka's settings—his cages in which man is confined, the staircases leading off into infinity, the narrow corridors, dark cellars, secret galleries—compose a 20th century landscape. We must not forget that in Kafka's novels and some of his stories, the objective world is portrayed as a gigantic, monolithic, bureaucratic apparatus. And this is really what our world is like where man has become part of an anonymous mechanism and the victim of an inscrutable apparatus of power.—

Liehm:—What caused this break from the traditions of nineteenth century fiction?—

Karst:—There is no easy answer to that. It would differ for every writer. Generally speaking, the main reasons are rooted in the evolution of society, in political developments and in new discoveries in science and psychology. You might also say that in the 20th century, the world—as far as its literary expression is concerned—has lost its "epic" character. It has become unintelligible for us. After two world wars which grew out of intense social and political conflicts, not only our concept of life has changed, but of death too. In the past, men have never died so mechanically and anonymously as they did at Auschwitz. The atomic bomb has raised the question of mankind's future. Air travel and space flights have stood our concepts of time and space on their heads. Radio and television enable us to experience simultaneously something that is going on around us and what is happening tens of thousands of miles away. Psychoanalysis has discovered whole new worlds within us. We used to think that our psychic structure had only one dimension, but now

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hidden layers of consciousness have been discovered which we never even knew about.

These are just a few examples of how hard it has become for a creative writer to describe the world. It has been atomized in his mind. This same process is what gave rise to modern prose and which we can find reflected in it, starting with Rilke's Malte Brigg through Joyce and Kafka and up to the present day.—

Liehm:—Why does neo-Stalinism insist so stubbornly that socialist-realism or realism, anyway, is the prose of the twentieth century?—

Karst:—Any literature which does not give clear and satisfactory answers to the questions posed by the present, which admits its own impotence and anguish, which doesn't elevate the spirit or have a didactic and pedagogical influence, has always been suspect for the Stalinist and all doctrinaire dogmatists. Every political system growing out of a situation where freedom is denied, requires constant acquiescence and justification. The kind of literature I have been talking about does not and cannot fill these requirements. It does not nod in agreement. It disagrees. It does not radiate joy, but despair. It is not optimistic, but tragic because it has grown out of a tragic world. It does not claim to be any better or worse than the world around it. That is why it is so much more real than those optimistic coloring books of socialist realism which have nothing in common with reality at all.—

Liehm:—In Prague today, Kafka is not only accused of being decadent and destructive. His Jewishness has also become an issue.—

Karst:—I am not surprised. The vision of a Jewish vampire drinking the blood of burgeoning Czechoslovak socialism is quite consistent with the process which began with the invasion of Russian tanks. Since the Communist Party in Poland took on a fascist character during the 1960s and in Czechoslovakia after 1969, both countries are condemned to a barren cultural life and to misery. The most recent developments around the figure of Franz Kafka are just one example. But I still believe that both our nations, which have survived so much already, will survive this present tragedy too.—

But why, in his native land, did Kafka become the "central figure in the fight to break out of the isolation into which it had fallen during the years of Stalinism and Cold War?"

Although the Liblice Conference aroused considerable international interest, its repercussions were restricted to just a handful of the initiated in those countries with a censured press. The proceedings of the conference were published in 3,400 copies only one year later and official reaction in the press was limited to a few bland commentaries and facts about who participated and about the closing reception. The overwhelming majority of the fourteen million Czechs and Slovaks had not even realized that a conference had been held in their country about this writer who had been born in Prague and written in German. Most of them had never even heard of him. There was little hope of changing this.

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But as it often happens, help came from the least expected quarter. The "comrades in the German Democratic Republic" had not said their last word. Fritz Kurella, who was then chief of the ideological department of the SED, was infuriated by Prague's revisionism "*in Sache Kafka*". He gave vent to his wrath on four pages in the East Berlin cultural weekly, *Sonntag*, under a headline paraphrasing Garaudy's article on Liblice in *Les Lettres Francaises*. Garaudy and Fischer were the main target of his attack. But it was not until later that we saw the connection between the absence of Soviet representatives, the role of the GDR delegation and Kurella's proxy attack in *Sonntag* on two top West European Communists. Later, those who incited Kurella to write his article, not only used tanks and airplanes to liquidate those who organized the Liblice Conference, but they also got something else they had wanted—Garaudy's and Fischer's heads. Fritz Kurella was an official delegate of the SED at the French Communist Party Congress in 1970 where Garaudy was expelled.

Sonntag had the advantage or disadvantage of being an exceedingly boring product of official journalism which very few people read, even in the GDR. At that time, *Literární Noviny* (the weekly published by the Czechoslovak Writers' Union) was an exceptionally good newspaper, given the conditions in Eastern Europe. It had a circulation of 140,000 and was always sold out as soon as it reached the newsstands. Kurella's article in *Sonntag* provided a unique opportunity to tell *Literární Noviny* readers about what had really happened in Liblice and to make Kafka's rehabilitation in Eastern Europe not just a matter of literary interest, but a political event too. Which is what it was.

Literární Noviny published a translation of the full text of Kurella's article. Its dogmatism and vulgarized version of Marxism, not to mention its language, were like a voice out of another century. Readers in Prague were shocked and the censors were delighted. They had never expected such cooperation and understanding from the editors of *Literární Noviny*, of all people. But Kurella's article had been published with a footnote, inviting a rebuttal by those whom he had attacked. Their replies were already on the editor's desk. Fischer, Garaudy, Pavel Reiman (a charter member of the Czechoslovak Community Party) and others involved "*in Sache Kafka*" not only told Kurella what they thought of him, his article and his methods, but they also gave their own views on literature, Marxism, socialism, alienation in a socialist society and so on.

At that time, Ernst Fischer wrote: "All this reminds us too much of what we thought belonged to a past which is gone forever. From the 1930s until the death of Stalin, discussion was more and more superseded by suspicion. Every opinion which deviated from the sanctioned view, was not challenged on specific points, but it was denounced instead as incompatible with Marxism, infiltrated by the class enemy in order to serve an anti-Communist political

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purpose. I feel it is my duty to call attention to these remnants of such old methods, because we have ahead of us a period of far-reaching international debate and discussion and for this we need an atmosphere of unsullied freedom of thought."

Their replies reached 140,000 readers—almost half a million Czechs and Slovaks out of total population of almost fourteen million. They could hardly believe their eyes. They knew nothing about Kafka or very little. But now, in 1963, truths were suddenly being told which hadn't been uttered for the past twenty years in a newspaper debate which started out about an author who had evidently lived in the same kind of society as they did, had many of the same experiences, found things just as puzzling and, in general, felt the same way they did. Finally Franz Kafka became the most popular author in the country where he was born but where few people knew much about him or had read any of his books. Thousands of these people had never even heard of *The Trial*, *The Castle*, or *Metamorphosis*, but now, when they got together in their offices or shops or in the streetcar and confronted man's complete alienation and the way they were all being manipulated by society in their daily lives, they would cast up their eyes and confide in a whisper to the first stranger they met, "This is just like Kafka!"

This little phrase became a Czech idiom even before the first volume of Kafka's collected works was published. Every new volume—and they were published in tens of thousands of copies—was sold out before the first review came out in the papers. People wanted to understand the kind of world they were living in, what determined the parameters of their lives and what was their purpose—if there is any purpose at all in this society. And they hoped that Franz Kafka would be able to give them an answer. Many were probably disappointed in the end, because they found no recipe for escaping from their vicious circle. But certainly Franz Kafka and the circumstances which led him to write, helped them to identify the situation and to orient themselves in it.

It was almost ten years later, this time in New York, and Roger Garaudy and I were reminiscing about the past. Both of us had gone as far as we could go within the system of which we had once been a part. Inevitably and quite consciously we had at a certain moment passed beyond its boundaries and decided to measure it against the world as it was, against reality and our own unadulterated experience. No wonder the conversation turned around our nocturnal dialogue, in Nice almost eleven years ago, around Franz Kafka and, primarily, Garaudy's concept of realism and my interpretation of it. He disagreed with it.

After the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, he had told me then, he could not but fundamentally revise a great many of his previous conclusions: "I was working on the Picasso essay then and I gave a lot of thought to the way the Soviets evaluated him, and to their whole concept

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of realism which had grown out of a quest for the system of aesthetics to help stabilize the young regime which had taken power. But if a revolution becomes sclerotic, it needs transcendance rather than realism. I was mainly concerned with graphic art in this essay and I saw more and more clearly that the greatness of every work of art lies in the degree to which it provides us with a new kind of model of what is real, something which has existed before. This is just as true of Giotto as it is of Picasso. That is why Kafka seemed like such a genuine symbol of transcendence. It appeared to me as though he had been trying to do what Lunacharsky had had in mind—to form an alliance between the artistic and political avant garde. At that time, three individuals seemed to me to be such pioneering artists, not only because of their concept of art, but also their concept of man: Picasso, Kafka and St. John Perse. That was also why I was so delighted to accept the invitation to go to Liblice...!

Liehm:—But wasn't this attempt to make these three artists fit into your definition of realism inspired by political needs? In a good sense?—

Garaudy:—For me, it was because I had been trying to find a way to come to terms with the positivist concept of reality. I thought the Soviet Union was wrong and so was Lukács for starting from such a positivist standpoint, as though reality was the sum total of given facts simply needing to be joined together by law. Such a concept not only imprisons ideas within the boundaries of the given facts, but it also restricts every action to the limits of the established system. This is how socialist realism came to be simply a justification of the status quo and in the process, art had no sense, of course, and was crippled just as philosophy had been, for just one purpose—to justify Stalinism. Philosophy was transformed into the theology of the status quo, an aesthetic theology, certainly, but a theology none the less. If we accept Stalin's claim that the dialectics of history is simply part of the general dialectics of nature, we deny history one of its most important dimensions: that there are many possible alternatives, only one of which is realized.

If we apply this to politics, which is history in the process of action—*"im Werden"*—this means that there is always only one possible alternative and everything else is heresy, blasphemy and conspiracy... That is why the attitude of a political regime toward art is one of the best ways to judge the system. A non-positivist definition of reality recognizes the existence of many alternatives as an integral part of reality. The greatness of art stems from an anticipation of these alternatives. If we deny it this function, we are amputating one of man's and history's fundamental dimensions. Marx once said that people make history for themselves, even though it is more likely a continuation of the structures left over from the past. Denying art the anticipation of alternatives means denying man the responsibility for his own history. It means making him a passive character in a play that has already been written.

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I define every work of art as realistic only if it takes into account man's specific dimensions, in other words, his capacity for transcendence. Or if you prefer, our human inability to be satisfied with being nothing more than the end product of our past, of those conditions which created us. Man brings into being the measure of multitudes. 'Je suis né plusieurs et je suis mort un seul,' said Gide.

Stalin's vision of history is a history created by the dead. We have also found out that there is even a future created by the dead according to previously established laws.

Man cannot escape his responsibility even for aesthetics. Artistic creation is a model of revolutionary action and ethics: it is wrenching oneself out of alienation. Creativity is the antithesis of alienation. As Fichte said, 'The aesthetic act is a humanization of transcendence.'

The official line in Soviet aesthetics has remained practically unchanged since the time of Stalin. And realism is always its enemy whenever it tries to grasp reality on the move. My objections to realism begin whenever it ignores change and when it recognizes no other alternative than that which exists. But Marxism in the USSR has already been transformed into its own opposite; it has become positivist in its outlook. Which is just what Comte said it was: law and order. System. Routine.—

Liehm:—What about Kafka?—

Garaudy:—It was the Kafka conference which made all of this quite clear. Those who were attacked then, hit back immediately. Remember how I referred to the "swallows of springtime" in my article in *Les Lettres Françaises*? Kurella immediately retaliated, saying that Garaudy was confusing swallows with bats. I had said that Kafka is an author of alienation. Kurella claimed there is no alienation in socialism, citing Marx. That's strange, I replied. Why, contemporary socialism constantly stresses the need for a strong state and we know that Marx believed the state is one of the causes of alienation. Marx and genuine socialists everywhere, see the state as something evil so maybe this is what gives Kafka such a unique opportunity to point the way to transcendence. This opportunity is quite specific for his time and place.

Kafka taught us to decipher society, the human situation and the human being within society. He made alienation even more unbearable simply because he made us more aware of it. He has created an abstract model which explains alienation in today's socialist countries. He has made it impossible to fall back into positivism. Instead, he forces us to try to break down the mechanisms of alienation. He built the model and then he showed us that it must be destroyed...—

We were getting ready to say goodbye when he thought of something else.

Garaudy:—A friend of mine in Vienna once asked me to read some sort of declaration about culture, literature and art. Then he asked me if I knew

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where it came from. Without hesitation, I said that it was something written by Goebbels or someone else in his ministry during the 1930s. My friend smiled sadly and pointed to something I had not noticed at the bottom of the article. It was datelined Moscow and it came from *Pravda*...—

Liehm:—We are familiar with these analogies. How often have we encountered something like this. But the problem is not the similarity, but the difference. Where does this difference lie?—Now it was Garaudy's turn to smile.

Garaudy:—I'll leave that up to you. You're younger than I am...—

Meanwhile, back in "normalized" Prague, they had again declared war against their townsman, Franz Kafka. And naturally also against those living individuals who had brought him back to life. In the trial conducted against him by people who could have stepped right out of *The Castle* (this is the oracular dimension of realism of which Garaudy spoke), Franz Kafka was found guilty of crimes which he would never have been able to imagine. Among other things, he was charged with being one of the main instigators of Prague Spring whose roots, according to the charges, the pamphlets and articles about him, date back to the Liblice Conference. This accusation is not entirely wrong, as the reader can see. Its terminology is just too simplistic, too journalistic. Basically, the whole trouble is that Kafka was concerned with man's salvation.

As for Eduard Goldstücker, they literally hounded him out of the country. There were 500,000 of Them, plus a handful of local talent. This Kafka balance sheet would be incomplete, of course, without hearing what he is thinking these days. This was not easy. Goldstücker is now a professor at the University of Sussex, but he spent a year in California as a fellow of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, whereas I was...well, anyway, we somehow managed and this is what Eduard Goldstücker had to say: "In February 1964, a report to the politbureau of the East German Communist Party was published in East Berlin, drafted by one of its members, Horst Sindermann. By its harsh attack on Prague 'revisionist' intellectuals, this interesting document was an official, public interference in the affairs of another ruling Communist Party. In the meantime, Kafka's works had begun to appear in all the socialist countries, including East Germany. But we discovered how East German official circles really felt about it only from hints of the following sort: In the spring of 1966, a leading East German poet informed a group of his Czechoslovak colleagues that two influential ideological functionaries of the East German Communist Party, Rodenberg and Wagner, had warned him against the 'revisionists' in Czechoslovakia, telling him that someday, the 'loyal Party cadres' [*parteitreu Kader*] would join forces with the army there and take care of the intellectual trouble-making riffraff in Prague. The gentlemen obviously had the gift of

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prophecy. They were just slightly mistaken about the army's nationality.

Even in his wildest dreams, Franz Kafka would have found it hard to imagine what a battle would center around him. This conflict entered a new phase with the occupation of Czechoslovakia on August 21, 1968. What happened was roughly what the gentlemen in Berlin had predicted. Their 'truth' was not confirmed by arguments, but by hundreds of thousands of soldiers and several thousand tanks. (Here one cannot help remembering an article about Russia in 1850, written by the 19th century Czech journalist, Karel Havlíček. In it, he wrote that any truth which must be imposed with the help of 900,000 bayonets and 100,000 horses, 'is more to be pitied than feared.' Historically, Havlíček was certainly right, but those on whom such 'truth' has been imposed are probably not so sure.) The notorious 'creeping counter-revolution' which had been invented by East Germany was suppressed, a *coup d'état* was staged, Stalinist dogmatism restored and following the old, familiar path, the ideological struggle was entrusted to the police and their hired propaganda hacks. This police-inspired operation was nourished from two main sources, which soon merged in a single filthy stream. The first source was in East Germany, the second in the wide, open spaces of Poland and Russia. In both cases, there were attempts to justify the military intervention of the Warsaw Pact countries—in other words, to justify the unjustifiable. No matter how hard they try, it can never result in anything but Stalin's infamously concocted accusations against innocent people. It is no exaggeration to say that in form and content, everything which has been written on this subject since that August day— starting with the so-called Moscow White Book—followed patterns once evolved by Jezhov, Vyshinsky and Beria. The forcible restoration of an obviously bankrupt regime has many historical parallels, not only in Czechoslovakia, but in the rest of the world. The Bourbons didn't forget either; nor did they learn much. Unfortunately, I can't quote from memory that passage from (the 17th century Jesuit scholar) Balbín's *Obrana jazyka českého* [In Defence of the Czech Language] where he describes how the victors behaved after the Battle of the White Mountain, when they occupied the Czech lands. The analogies are striking.

East Germany tried to convince people that those who openly and actively supported Prague Spring were fundamentally nothing else but agents of West Germany (after using West Germany as a bogie man for so long, they finally stepped in to occupy us themselves). On September 10-12, 1968, three long articles appeared in the East German Communist Party's central organ *Neues Deutschland*. They were signed by someone named Kurt Zimmermann and entitled 'The Spiritual Forerunners of Counter-Revolution [*Die geistigen Vorreiter der Konterrevolution*].' I quote from the first article: 'The organizational center and spiritual forerunner of counter-revolution in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was a group of intellectuals (mainly writers,

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artist, economists, philosophers and sociologists) who were very closely connected with others who shared an imperialist and social-democratic ideology in West Germany as well as with revisionists in many other countries... In Czechoslovakia during the second half of the 1950s, it was widely claimed that they were combatting dogmatism and the scarecrow of 'Stalinism' [it is indicative that in 1968, twelve years after the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, *Neues Deutschland* puts 'Stalinism' ironically into quotes!] But this fight in reality was aimed against the socialist system, the party of the working class and the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism.' This evidently was not enough: they had to pin it down with a concrete case. 'An important milestone in the spread of revisionist and bourgeois ideology was the Kafka conference in May, 1963. It was on that occasion that revisionism came out into the open on a mass scale in Czechoslovakia. First, that was when the apparently abstract problem of alienation was pushed to the forefront. In contradiction to the Marxist concept that alienation is essentially the result of capitalist exploitation and that it will gradually be eliminated as the working classes take political power and with man's evolution in socialist democracies. But Ernst Fischer and Eduard Goldstücker, among others, have developed the thesis that alienation is just as characteristic of socialism as it is of capitalism. This assault on the Marxist-Leninist theory of alienation was no coincidence. It became quite obvious during the Kafka conference and especially in the years immediately after (particularly in the case of Ernst Fischer) that the theory of alienation which was developed by Goldstücker and others, was clearly aimed at discrediting socialism in its every aspect... It was from this theory of alienation in socialism that the familiar conclusion was drawn that writers, artists and scholars should in the first place be critics of socialism and not its defenders.' Along with Zimmermann's articles, the East German minister of culture, Klaus Gysi, also joined the campaign in a rather original way, devoting most of his speech at the 20th anniversary ceremonies of the reopening of Weimar's National Theatre, to the Kafka conference. He accused Ernst Fischer, myself and others of wanting to erase Goethe's *Faust*, that symbol of the working class, from the minds of the socialist people. Apparently we wanted to replace him by Kafka's sad hero, Gregor Samsa, who turned into an insect."

So much for East Germany—and I've just skimmed the cream, ignoring the curdled dregs.

The charges sounded somewhat different which emerged from the inner sanctums of the Kafka tribunals in Poland and the Soviet Union. Kafka was Jewish and there was a wave of anti-semitism sweeping Poland at that time which General Moczar hoped would carry him to power. The Soviet Union was making it hard for Jews who wanted to emigrate to Israel. There and elsewhere, governments have always blamed their troubles on secret

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machinations of the Jews. After all, what would be easier than to blame the interest in Kafka on an international Jewish conspiracy—excuse me, we are not living under czarism anymore—I meant, on Zionism? By now, such arguments would make up a sizeable archives. I'll cite just two examples. In 1970, a book entitled *Zionism* was published in Czech and Slovak. The edition was huge. It was made up of three long articles by 'specialists' in this field from the USSR and Poland. One of them, Yuri Ivanov, describes the international Zionist conspiracy in a style that reminds us of his predecessors who manfactured *The Protocols of Zion*. It was written in 1968. In his forty page introduction, Evgeni Evseiev follows Ivanov's lead and describes Prague Spring as an operation staged by 'Zionism and Judaism.' To make the picture complete, the book concludes with a concoction by a notorious Polish 'expert,' Tadeusz Walichnowsky. Evseiev, who collected his material with the help of members of the Czechoslovak State Security Services from the 1950s, strikes a familiar note when he claims that 'in the fight against socialism in Czechoslovakia in particular, imperialism and the anti-socialist forces chose Zionism as a distinctive but exceptionally sharp and effective weapon.' Then, in this same connection, he goes on to discuss the Kafka conference which he considers as 'the beginning of a long-term operation in ideological subversion which was aimed especially at molding the outlook and philosophy of the young generation...the beginning of a propaganda drive for the decadent works of Franz Kafka.' Then the policeman turns into a literary critic: 'From a literary standpoint, his (Kafka's) works are quite mediocre, in content, full of anguish, hopeless nostalgia and a dreary melancholy, a lack of faith in man's perspectives and his happiness. The author's ideas, put forward in a most peculiar way, produce a feeling of oppression, especially among young readers, and create a sense of impotence, of one's own futility in this huge world that is so filled with shame and horrors.' Evseiev makes another point in his charges against Kafka: 'The major role in this ideological assault waged by imperialism against the youth in socialist countries, was played by Eduard Goldstücker... In 1963, a noisy, widely—and artificially—publicized conference on the works of Franz Kafka was held which, from start to finish, was a carefully contrived political manoeuvre of a subversive character...Anti-socialist forces considered the Kafka discussions as an effective instrument which could legally transform itself unhindered into an attack against socialism in the realm of ideology and politics.'

As far as alienation is concerned, go to Czechoslovakia today and tell the people there that it doesn't exist. They will laugh in your face and count you among those who keep trying to convince them that black is not black and white is not white. The whole Czechoslovak nation lives with a sense of alienation. It starts with the children who must have it impressed upon them at an early age that in school they must not talk the way they do at home, and it includes factory and office workers, teachers, scientists, as well as top

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politicians. This feeling of being alienated is not the fault of Franz Kafka and his commentators, but of someone else. When Evseiev speaks of a 'world of shame and horror,' it is like speaking of rope in the house of a hangman. This kind of world was not created twenty years ago—or again, in August 1968—by Kafka or the 'Kafkaists.' It was made by the men who hired Evseiev and others like him. Who is guilty, then—the person who is responsible for causing all this shame, or the one who draws our attention to it? In olden times, when a messenger brought bad news, it was the custom for the sovereign to have him put to death. Of course, those were the days of darkest barbarism and even then, probably only the most thick-skulled really believed that you could erase an unpleasant fact by getting rid of the person who reported it. Unfortunately, this nonsensical magic rite is conducted on a massive scale today. It also has something to do with the Kafka question.

In Czechoslovakia, František J. Kolár enlisted as another 'expert' in the anti-Kafka war. (My pen is hesitant when I write this name; I have never mentioned it in public for twenty years. Not since the time I was brought before the Czechoslovak Supreme Court and charged, among many other things, with having helped to smuggle such alien, hostile elements as F.J. Kolár into the ranks of the Communist Party.) In June, 1972, Kolár published an article linking the two above-mentioned themes of the anti-Kafka campaign. The article was published in the magazine whose editor-in-chief was Jiří Hájek, the once-impassioned participant of the Kafka conference in 1963. I will quote just the first and last sentence of his argument: 'If we are to discuss the influence of Zionism on the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968—and particularly on what led up to them—then we must make a detailed analysis of 'Kafkaism' and of the 'alienation' connected with it. Those who propagate this fashionable ideology, which was deviously introduced into this country from the West, have always emphasized the Jewish and Judaic origins of Kafkaism.' And his conclusion: '. . . in this anti-Communist interpretation. . . Franz Kafka was to become an explosive which was to blow up the socialist social system. The poisonous products of these efforts to misuse Kafka must not be allowed to penetrate the thinking of our educated young people, from whom neither Kafka nor the Kafka-ites can be concealed...'

But fortunately, the Kafka discussion continues elsewhere too, among those for whom Marxism and socialism are not synonymous with the last word from Moscow: among people for whom these things mean a vision of a more humane society and world outlook,and for whom the Liblice conference represented ten years ago a pledge that the road would be cleared toward the kind of socialism which would correspond to the needs and desires of people in our day and age.

Some time ago, Lucio Lombardo Radice, a professor at the University of Rome and a member of the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party, published a fine collection of essays about Franz Kafka, Mikhail Bulgakov, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Milan Kundera. It is entitled *Gli*

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accusati (*The Accused*) and it was written, as the dedication tells us, in order 'to advance the discussion inaugurated in Prague in 1963 by Eduard Goldstücker and other European Marxists for the purpose of conferring citizenship status in the socialist countries on the author of *The Trial*.' Lombardo Radice comments at length on the Kafka conference, recalling its spirit of candor and rejecting the dogmatic, rigid and degenerate brand of Stalinist Marxism which was restored to power in Czechoslovakia after its occupation in 1963. 'Marxism,' writes Radice, 'these instructions for action, as Lenin called them, which, as Engels said, renew themselves with every great discovery, has suddenly become an unshakeable dogma. It is now once and for all truth, a 'definitive, last-word' truth, not one which must evolve and be discovered every day. Of course, what this really means is a rejection of openness, an extolling of a tight, unified, restrictive kind of Marxism. It means combatting pluralism. In other words—let's come right out and say it—it means opposing science and research.' Radice attacks the dogmatists, saying that for them, 'there is no internal dialectic in Communism. It is either yes or no. On one hand, there is defensiveness, on the other, "the discrediting of socialism." Any internal criticism is impermissible: it is immediately labelled as "creeping counter-revolution" and considered as an objective alliance with imperialist attacks, if not as a conscious fellow-culprit. The theoretical denial of any possibility for "pluralism in Marxism" leads to the conclusion that if Brezhnev is a Communist, Dubček isn't, so he must be an instrument of counter-revolution, whether by his own weakness or because he is a traitor.' In conclusion, Lombardo Radice says: 'Today, after such uncritical faith which may once have had a certain grandeur, and a certain function, after so much confident optimism—which we may have needed at moments when we were fighting for our lives—if a person wants to be an effective revolutionary now, if he is to be capable of overcoming crises and a waning of interest and loss of popularity, he must be critical and analytical. For this, a strong sense of watchful anxiety is precious. We find this in Franz Kafka and his heroes, along with a valiant and undaunted determination to put up a fight.'

So the debate goes on. And tanks don't usually have the last word in arguments about ideas.—

Once again, their efforts to annihilate Franz Kafka ended tragically. But like every tragedy, this one also had its comic side. One of the speakers at the Kafka conference was the Czech critic Jiří Hájek, officially assigned the task of liberalizing Czechoslovak culture during the second half of the 1950s. There is no need to add that every officially designated liberalizer is at the same time its guard and official interpreter. But Czech culture thumbed its nose at liberalizers and interpreters and it liberalized itself, without them. The liberalizer suddenly found himself at the tail end of the procession, so he

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hurried to add his bit of grist to the mill. Paradoxically, Hájek was the one who was responsible for inviting Ernst Fischer to Liblice.

But that was not enough. When the Soviet tanks rolled in, Jiří Hájek found himself a new job, this time as "normalizer" of Czechoslovak culture. Sometimes a bureaucrat's flexibility is quite fantastic. If we compare *Tvorba*, the magazine which Hájek edits today, with *Plamen*, which he edited during the first half of the 1960s, it is almost impossible to believe that the editors are one and the same person. I do not mean just their content. A person can change and evolve, even if Hájek was rather well on in years to change so much. I mean the form of the two magazines, their presentation, general intellectual and linguistic level. *Tvorba* shows that Czech cultural journalism has fallen to its lowest depths in the 20th century, for even during the Nazi occupation and the worst years of Stalinism, the cultural periodicals—as long as they existed—always maintained certain intellectual and linguistic standards.

So now Hájek is busy "normalizing." This entails attacking the spiritual fathers of the Kafka conference—Goldstücker, Fischer, philosopher Karel Kosik, to all of whom he had bowed respectfully during his remarks at Liblice... ("...as the Czechslovak scholar, E. Goldstücker, was probably the first to point out, Kafka appeals to our consciences and consciousness as Communists... In his great pioneering study, Ernst Fischer identified Kafka as a milestone and a symptomatic phenomenon of 20th century man... Karel Kosik's study points out the profound relationship between Kafka and progressive Czech literary traditions..." and so on). Hájek lashes out at Kafka, at decadence, at the revisionism of the 1960s and primarily, of course, at those who were silenced by the tanks which put him in such a position of power over these old adversaries.

Why am I relating this tragi-comic anecdote right now? Because Ernst Fischer, who did not live to see the tenth anniversary of the Liblice Conference where he played such a key role (Fischer died in the summer of 1972), devoted one of his last public appearances to his former sycophant, Jiří Hájek, and Franz Kafka. Speaking over the Austrian radio in the spring of 1972, Fischer said: "The Czechoslovak Writers' Union once included within its ranks many people of high character and great talent. It played an important role in preparing the way for what happened in the spring of 1968 which is why, after the military occupation, this Union was dissolved as part of the 'normalization' process. The new regime finally put together a new union which is so perfectly 'normalized' that it far surpasses every norm. Its chairman, Jan Kozák, an unknown figure far and wide, launched its first congress, a clumsy attack on Eduard Goldstücker, who is living now in exile. Among other things, Kozák accused this fine man and scholar of having really started this whole destructive process as early as 1963 with his speech about Franz Kafka. According to Kozák, Kafka's works, which he finds exceedingly

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depressing, contributed to the ideological disintegration of the Czechoslovak system. True, these are not works which are exactly cheering and optimistic for the world we live in, but they are not nearly so depressing as the way things are in Czechoslovakia in 1972... One of the speakers at this conference then was Jiří Hájek who has in the meantime made a career for himself as an adaptable informer. Unlike Kozák who denounced Kafka's writings as though they were a contagious disease and an infection in the bloodstream of a socialist country, this same Jiří Hájek had said in 1963 that Kafka 'appeals to our consciences and consciousness as Communists so that we can rid our socialist life of all distortions such as bureaucracy, for instance.' That was the same time when Hájek also said: 'In our society, Kafka represents a passionate appeal to all that is human in us... For us, Kafka is a great, impassioned, pure appeal to human reason to create within the socialist world all the conditions for the things we yearn for, which the human heart must have if it is to live.' Today, this 'impassioned appeal' Hájek spoke of, has been labeled as a contagious illness. This system, which is fundamentally inhumane, will not tolerate the infiltration of human conscience or consciousness. Goldstücker has been hounded from his country and Kafka has followed him. What has stayed behind is a normalized Hájek, the censors and the police."

But what about Kafka? In Prague in 1973, a decade after Liblice? I suppose he has become literature again. He has not lost any of the abilities of which Karst and Garaudy spoke. But he has ceased to be a *res politica*. He could be that only as long as the Czechs and Slovaks could identify themselves with Surveyor K. and his anguished efforts to break down the wall and to enter the Castle.

But they finally entered the Castle on the night of August 21, 1968, and during the days and months that followed. There is no mystery anymore, no enigma, no inaccessible goal which they must reach. They no longer say, 'This is just like Kafka!' Everybody knows by now that the Castle is empty, that there is nothing there for them. Not what they would have been looking for. Just crude power, military might. Police. Which makes the answer to questions about their situation all that much easier and more concrete.

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*Hašek and Kafka**

by Karel Kosik

This piece is entitled "Hašek and Kafka" but it could equally well be considered a variation on the theme of world fame versus provincialism.

Hašek and Kafka were born in the same city in the same year, spent most of their lives in Prague, wrote their world-famous books around the time of World War I, and died a year apart. These of course are only superficial and accidental facts which in and of themselves reveal little about the relationship of the two authors.

The problem might be reversed, though. What kind of an environment was it that produced phenomena as dissimilar as Hašek and Kafka? What is Kafka's Prague like, and how is Hašek's Prague? Both writers brought fame to their home town. Their work is linked with Prague, and in certain ways Prague is captured in it.

Švejk's "odyssey" "under the honorable escort of two soldiers with fixed bayonets" takes him from the Hradčany garrison jail down Neruda Street and over the Charles Bridge to Karlin. Here is an interesting group of three people —two guards leading a delinquent. In the opposite direction, over the Charles Bridge and up to Strahov, a different threesome is on its way: from Kafka's *Trial*. Two men lead a "delinquent," the bank clerk Josef K., to the Strahov quarry where one of them will "thrust [a] knife deep into his heart." Both groups pass through the same places but they cannot meet. As was customary, Švejk was released from jail and undertook the journey with the two soldiers in the morning, whereas the two men with top hats lead Josef K. in the evening, "in the moonlight."

What if the two groups did meet, though? They would pass each other without noticing, because Josef K. is quite absorbed in studying the physiognomy of his mysterious companions whereas Švejk is fully occupied in a comradely conversation with his guards. It might be possible, though, that the men do look at each other as they meet. They look, but they do not recognize. People see each other but do not recognize who they are. And who are they, indeed?

Josef K. finds Hašek's threesome too funny, and nothing but funny, without the deeper unexpected meaning revealed in the world of the slapstick comedy. Josef Švejk finds Kafka's threesome as a similarly comic apparition which masks the real, grotesquely tragic fate of Josef K. Both see only the externality of the other, and therefore pass with indifference.

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* This essay was originally prepared for the Liblice Conference on Kafka in Prague, 1963. [It was a review of Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk* now available in an English translation by Cecil Parrott, published by Thomas Y. Crowell.] Translated into English by Karel Kovanda.

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This is one possible encounter of Hašek and Kafka which captures only the exterior and surface plane. We might, however, proceed from the authors to the second plane, that of their work. Is it at all possible to "compare and contrast" the works of Hašek and of Kafka? At first glance there seems to be no connection between the two. One reads Kafka to interpret him, but one reads Hašek for laughs. Dozens and hundreds of interpretations of Kafka have been produced and his work is perceived and received as problematic, enigmatic, full of riddles and codes, accessible only through de-coding, i.e., through interpretation. With Hašek, everything seems clear. Everybody seems to understand everything, his work appears so transparent and lucid that the reader's laughter offers the only possible approach.

Yet, is not this transparence and clarity only illusory, and thus deceptive and misleading?

Western interpreters have applied all manner of analytical methods to Kafka's work: from psychoanalysis, structural analysis, sociological and anthropological research, search for its theological and philosophical aspects, to connections with the ideas and world of Judaism, Christianity, of Kierkegaard, Dostoyevsky, and so on. They have just about exhausted the full gamut of possible interpretations. Conversely, for Hašek we seem to have a universal picklock that opens up his work, namely the celebrated principle of mass popularity. Rather than opening up Hašek's work, though, the principle of popularity denies access to it: for it prevents us from grasping the full depth and breadth of its problems.

What is the meaning of Hašek's work? What is the relation between its "conventional" language and the modernity of its content? Does the *Good Soldier Švejk* really lack a unified structure, and is its narration really fragmented? What is the point of all its anecdotes? Is it at all feasible to question problems of time, of comedy, tragedy, and grotesqueness in Hašek's work?[1]

And who is Švejk? As far as I know, four different answers to this question have been offered.[2] The first has it that Švejk is Sancho Panza without his Don Quixote. He represents a variation of the master-servant theme, a modern parallel to Cervantes' heroes or to Diderot's Jacques Fataliste. However, Švejk has two masters, no less. This in itself indicates that reducing Švejk to the traditional master-servant format captures only a partial aspect of him.

The second possible answer views Švejk as a fool, buffoon, a clown with the privilege to talk the truth. This too leads to relationships that world literature has dealt with, in the pattern of the oafish clown and the august

1. For an excellent treatment of the connections between Hašek's work and the European novel, see R. Grebeničkova, "Musil's 'Man Without Qualities'," *Světova literatura*, no. 1 (1963).

2. Credit is due to Ivan Olbracht and Max Brod who in the early twenties were the first to recognize Hašek not as an average humorist but as a writer of genius.

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"official." The clown represents the plebeian, vulgar world of comedy, whereas the "official," be it the ruler, the bureaucrat, prelate, or theologist, personifies that of tragedy. In Hašek's world, however, the clown-official relationship is not one of comedy-tragedy. Instead, authority itself is captured in comic circumstances, and the traditional barrier between the two worlds is torn down. Hasek's world is an integrated world of comedy, in which the so-called vulgar characters and the august ones both appear in comic and grotesque situations.

The third interpretation considers Švejk a popular joker, a wag, a modern *Eulenspiegel* whose magic powers make him invulnerable to this world. One might point out, however, that Hašek's character contains an element of tragedy which is foreign to *Eulenspiegels*, wags, and popular jokers.

The fourth interpretation takes Švejk to be the personification of little Czech people, humble as grass; it takes him as a man reduced to his biological needs, who survives world catastrophies because he cares only for mundane matters. Let us not forget, though, that Hašek's Švejk does not lack nobility and generosity. He was no Herostratus who set the Temple of Efes on fire in order to get some press coverage, but neither was he a narrow-minded philistine.

Who then is Švejk? If he is neither a servant without a master, nor a fool and a clown, nor a modern *Eulenspiegel*, nor a "little Czech man," who then is he? Švejk—is Švejk.

The meaning of this response can be clarified by an example. When passionate arguments rage over whether two and two is six or merely five, and whether for the benefit of the people it would be more useful, appropriate, and suitable for two and two to be six or five, the trivial and banal observation that two and two is four becomes a revolutionary and liberating act. The statement that Švejk is Švejk emphasizes Švejk's specificity. He is a figure that has to be studied independently in the world context, and cannot be explained merely by references to Diderot, Cervantes, Rabelais, or de Coster.

Who is Švejk and how does he appear? He appears at the same time as daft and crafty, as a fool and an idiot, an imbecile certified by the State and a rebel suspected by the State as a malingerer and a cool calculator, as a spy and a loyal subject. His appearing once as a fool and then as a smart-ass, once as a servant and then as a rebel, etc., while remaining all the time what he is, his mutable, elusive, and "mysterious" nature, all this is a consequence of Švejk's being a part of an overturned and overturning system based on the general presupposition that people pretend to be what in fact they are not. Key personalities in such a system are of necessity those of the swindler, and of the controller (the government inspector), and permanent mystification is one of its chief characteristics. Švejk is a figure in a system motored by make-believe and jerry-building: those who take things seriously and literally, as he does, reveal the absurdity of the system while their own activity appears

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absurd and grotesque. This is a system in which authorities are firmly convinced that their subjects are a bunch of swindlers, malingerers, trouble-makers and traitors, while the people recognize their superiors as grotesque and comic figures hiding behind the masks of official serenity. This is a system in which masks, masking and unmasking are among the fundamental human relationships.

Who is Švejk? Hašek's analyses show man reduced to an object. Švejk, however, is irreducible. The famous scene in the lunatic asylum is of key importance: " 'Take five paces forward and five to the rear," asked the doctor. Švejk took ten. 'But I told you to take five,' said the doctor. 'A few paces more or less are all the same to me,' said Švejk."

This is a key to understanding Švejk. People are constantly placed in a rationalized and calculable system where they are treated, disposed of, shoved and moved, reduced to something inhuman and extra-human, i.e., to a calculable and disposable thing or variable. But for Švejk, a few paces more or less are all the same. Švejk cannot be calculated, because he is unpredictable. Man is irreducible to a thing, and is always more than a system of factual relations in which he moves and is moved.

Does Švejk then don the mask of an idiot, concealing beneath it a face of ideal human nature and nobility? Does his mask of a loyal soldier cover the real face of a revolutionary? Hašek's genius is in showing man, his hero, as spanning an enormous dimension, covering extremes of an imbecile and a smart-ass, of a cynic and a noble, sensitive person, of a loyal citizen and a rebel.

Another point, the importance of which is highlighted in modern drama,[3] is that Hašek discovered for literature and for human knowledge certain locations where people meet but which had been previously disregarded. Hašek has people meet in latrines, railway stations, whorehouses, pubs, in hospitals, and also in a lunatic asylum. For Švejk, the asylum is in fact the only place under the sun where people are free. The question is, in what sense are they free? Does one have to become a lunatic in order to be free, or is one a lunatic when one is free? Is the nuthouse a shelter and haven for freedom, or does freedom have to be locked up in a nuthouse lest it harm people or get harmed by them?

I had a single purpose in discussing Hašek: to demonstrate that it is not with trivial banality and obviousness that he confronts the complexity, enigmatic nature, and mysterious character of Kafka's works ever in need of an interpretation. In its way, Hašek's work is equally mysterious and full of riddles, and has to be analyzed with methods of modern scholarship, too.

Švejk cannot be identified with Švejkism any more than Kafka can be identified with the Kafkaesque. What is the Kafkaesque world? It is the world

3. Cf., e.g., Friedrich Dürenmatt, *The Physicists*, situated in an asylum.

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of the absurdity of human thought and action, of human dreams, a world of a monstrous and unintelligible labyrinth, a world of human powerlessness in the network of bureaucratic machines, mechanisms, reified creations. Švejkism is a way of reacting to this world of absurd omnipotence of the machine and of reified relations. The Kafkaesque and Švejkism are world-wide phenomena, existing independently of Hašek's and Kafka's works; the two Prague authors supplied names for these phenomena, shaped their images in people's minds. Yet that does not mean that Hašek's work can be reduced to Švejkism or Kafka's to the Kafkaesque. Hašek's Švejk is simultaneously a critique of Švejkism, as much as Kafka's work is a critique of the Kafkaesque. Kafka and Hašek described and exposed these phenomena, while subjecting them to criticism. Kafka's man is walled in a labyrinth of petrified possibilities, reified relationships, in the reified workaday life which in his eyes acquires the shape of a supernatural phantasmagory. In this situation he constantly and with unabated passion questions what truth is. The only dignity Kafka's man can find is in interpreting the world he has been sentenced to live in, for other forces, beyond control of the individual, decide the world's course and its change. Hašek, in turn, proves that even in this reified image, man is still man, both the product and the producer of reification. Man is irreducible to an object, he is more than a system. As yet we lack suitable description for the fact that man contains in himself the tremendous and indestructible force of humanity. The genius of both authors presented in the first quarter of this century two separate visions of the world, described two specific types of people which at first glance appear distant and contradictory but which in reality complement one another. While Kafka depicted the world of human reification and showed that man must experience and live through all types of alienation to be human, Hašek showed man as transcending reification, irreducible to an object, to reified products or relations. One posited a negative, the other a positive scale of humanism. In this sense, both Hašek and Kafka are great legitimate sons of their hometown, and belong equally to Prague and the world.

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Marcuse's 'Second Dimension'

by Morton Schoolman

Modern capitalism has succeeded in arresting qualitative change in the realm of labor, if only temporarily, with the result that freedom and self-realization seem to terminate within the limits of expression circumscribed by the present social organization of production. We appear to be confronted with what Norman O. Brown has labeled a "vacuum in the Marxist utopia," that actually reflects a crisis in Marx's ontology precipitated by the perpetuation of obsolete modes of production.

Marcuse has attempted to fill this vacuum by substituting a Freudian concept of man. The Freudian ontology is intended to complement Marx's efforts to formulate a definition of non-alienated labor that is dependent on, but ontologically distinct—in the broad dimensions of freedom that it represents—from the particular historical manifestations of freedom evolving gradually through the self-creativity of labor in the productive process. There is substantial evidence in Marx's writings suggesting that what is meant by free and non-alienating human activity bears close resemblance to Marcuse's notion of "play," in that both "trace and project the potentialities of all being."[1] Though Marcuse's analysis of Freud was meant to complement and at the same time restore the transcendent character of Marx's concept of freedom, which is lost the moment the concept is restricted to the particular historical dialectic in the contemporary process of production, it is clear that Marcuse's interpretation of Freud provides us with as many problems as it attempts to solve. Perhaps nowhere does the influence of Heidegger show forth as clearly as it does in *Eros and Civilization*, where we find an unsystematic ontology that is often poetic and aphoristic. Based on an elucidation of Freud's instinct theory, the following is a comprehensive critical examination of Marcuse's exposition of Freud, that seeks to combine a concentrated effort to sort out its most significant errors and implications with a concluding suggestion for a reformulation of non-alienated labor in Freudian terms that can eventually be integrated with Marx's definition of the essence of man.

Freud designated the non-aggressive "libidinal" and "aggressive" instinctual predispositions as the two categories of pre-genital component

1. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (Boston, 1962), p. 172. Cf. also my article, "Further Reflections on Work, Alienation, and Freedom in Marx and Marcuse," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* XI:2 (June 1973).

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instincts.[2] Freud argues "that the infantile sexual life, in spite of the preponderating dominance of erotogenic zones, exhibits components which from the very first involve other people as sexual objects."[3] The concentration of tension in the three major zones of the body, the oral, anal and phallic zones (which account for the name of the stages through which the instincts pass), means that the organism reduces aggressive and non-aggressive instinctual excitations through the autoerotic manipulation of these three bodily areas. Yet, we must add that tension may occur throughout the entire body, or, in other words, the entire organism may be eroticized, i.e., become the sexual object of an instinct to achieve its aim. Freud referred to the infantile attempts at achieving instinctual gratification from all zones and generally eroticized areas of the body as polymorph perverse (polymorphous perversity).

Autoeroticism, the activity of gaining pleasure from the areas of the body, which serves to discharge tension and complete the instinctual aim, suggests another extremely important trait of the component instincts, namely, that the instincts operate *independently* of one another during the early stages of their and the organism's maturation. The instincts, for the duration of the pregenital phase, seek to achieve their aim of discharging tension, gaining pleasure, and to return immediately to an original quiescent condition through the oral, anal, and phallic zones as well as the other potentially eroticized areas of the body. Not only do the instincts operate independently of one another through the three pregenital zones, but the non-aggressive libidinal component instincts seek to discharge their aims independent of the aggressive component instinctual drives. Thus, during the pregenital stage, the behavior of all instincts is radically individualistic: during the pregenital stages of development, the component instincts are unalloyed, unfused, or

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2. Throughout the following discussion I speak about instinctual drives as though the instincts achieve their own aims autonomously and without the conscious awareness and intervention of the individual. This style is a matter of convenience and, in fact, parallels the stylistic design elected by Freud in his case histories, metapsychological works, clinical papers, discourses on psychoanalytic theory, and so on. Consider this example: "Those instincts which are inhibited in their aims always preserve some few of their original sexual aims" (*Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* [New York, 1965], p. 91). Freud does not mean, of course, and certainly neither do I, that the instincts "do this or do that."

3. Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (New York, 1962), p. 88. In anticipation of the criticism that since many of the theories presented in his early work are either discarded or supervened in subsequent writings, critical and interpretive analyses must focus exclusively on the later arguments, and while such changes of mind were clearly the rule rather than the exception regarding Freud's *Trieblehre*, the instinct theory's central concepts were retained fundamentally unaltered throughout Freud's extant labors. In view of the controversial nature of these issues, when I have relied upon concepts and theories taken from Freud's early work, to prove continuity I shall refer to mature writings where comparable evidence can be found, indicating respective dates of composition or publication. On the instincts component, cf. "The Paths to the Formation of Symptoms" (1917), *The Complete Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (New York, 1966), pp. 362, 374; *The Ego and the Id* (1923) (New York, 1960), p. 44; *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930) (New York, 1962), p. 86; *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (1938) (New York, 1962), pp. 12, 43.

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disunited.[4] In their search for pleasure, in their effort to discharge tension and achieve their aim, the instincts pursue their goals separately through the three sexual zones, through polymorphous perverse activity, and through contact with external object-cathexes until the phallic stage when these component instincts are then fused or alloyed by being subordinated to the genital sphere.[5]

What is decisive about this process of fusion and subordination is that it is the natural outcome of a *biological* maturation process during which an unorganized and unrestrained, in a sense, free distribution of instinctual drives, where the instincts discharge their aims independently of one another, changes to an organized and delimited condition in the service of the genital zone.[6]

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4. *Ibid.*, pp. 59-62, pp. 88-90. Freud speaks of instinctual fusion, defusion, alloys, blends, combinations, admixtures, and so forth. Cf. "The Libido Theory" (1922), *Collected Papers* (New York, 1959), Vol. V, p. 135; *The Ego and the Id* (1923), pp. 20, 31-32, 44; "The Economic Problem in Masochism" (1924), *Collected Papers*, II, p. 262; *The Problem of Anxiety* (1926) (New York, 1963), pp. 46, 48; *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930), p. 66; "Anxiety and Instinctual Life" (1933), *The Complete Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, pp. 68-69; "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" (1937), *Collected Papers*, Vol. V, p. 345; *Outline of Psychoanalysis* (1938), Vol. II, p. 43.

5. As an illustration of this point, which also serves to demonstrate the continuity in Freud's thinking regarding the existence of the component instincts, and the significance of their independent behavioral patterns, compare Freud's statements from an early (1905) and mature (1933) metapsychological work. "With the arrival of puberty, changes set in which are destined to give infantile sexual life its final, normal shape. The sexual instinct has hitherto been predominantly autoerotic; it now finds a sexual object. Its activity has hitherto been derived from a number of separate instincts and erotogenic zones, which, independently of one another, have pursued a certain sort of pleasure as their sole sexual aim. Now, however, a new sexual aim appears, and all the component instincts combine to attain it, while the erotogenic zones become subordinated to the primacy of the genital zone" (*Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, p. 107); "What we see is a great number of component instincts arising from the different areas and regions of the body, which strive for satisfaction fairly independently of one another and find that satisfaction is something we may call 'organic pleasure' " ("Anxiety and Instinctual Life," p. 562).

6. That Freud imputed a biological character to instinctual behavior is incontestable. As late as 1937, Freud had written that "in the psychical field the biological is really the rock bottom" ("Analysis Terminable and Interminable," *Collected Papers*, Vol. V, p. 357), and this assertion merely summarizes an enduring belief in the neurophysiological basis of psychic behavior, first articulated by Freud in his "Project for a Scientific Psychology," of 1895. In light of the fact that Freud's preoccupation with the biological aspects of his metapsychology spans his entire career, it is unnecessary to cite additional examples. It is pertinent, however, to consider the seriousness with which Freud's assumption has been taken by modern psychoanalysis. Charles Brenner, for example, points out that "the manifestation of this omnipresent death drive in mental life, [Freud] argues, is the instinctual drive of aggression. [Freud] thus attempted to base his concept of aggression as an instinctual drive on a foundation of biological as well as psychoanalytical evidence" ("The Psychoanalytic Concept of Aggression," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* [1971], n. 52, p. 137). Brenner, in reference to Hartmann, Kris and Loewenstein, states that "according to them, the validity of the concept of a death drive is a matter for biologists to decide" (*ibid*). Though Brenner is not satisfied with the data offered in support of the biological nature of the instincts, which does not contradict the fact that Freud did ascribe a biological foundation to instinctual behavior, he argues that "it is possible that evidence will become available in the future to link aggression as an instinctual drive to particular physiological and endocrine phenomena" (*ibid.*, p. 138). Freud not only considered the instincts to have a biological nature,

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An interesting characteristic of pregenital instinctual drives is the possibility of achieving complete discharge of tension yielding complete, although temporary, satisfaction and pleasure. We note this possibility as a result of the immaturity of the instinct, referring to the unorganized division of the instincts into qualitatively distinct component impulses, and the accessibility of pregenital object-cathexes corresponding to this instinctual arrangement. Once these instincts become fused, gratification, even temporary gratification in some cases, becomes more difficult to achieve. This absence of complete instinctual gratification is the result of a number of instincts which, once fused into a new instinctual drive but nevertheless in retention of the need for discharge as *independent* aggressive and non-aggressive component instincts, must rely upon a *single* instinctual object-choice at one time in order to reach their aim. In other words, "the sexual instinct of childhood into a unity, an impulsion with a single aim,"[7] or, as Freud makes clearer elsewhere, "the same object may serve for the satisfaction of several instincts simultaneously."[8] Consequently, only some proportion of the component instincts are gratified, which is tantamount to saying that the fused instinctual drive cannot achieve the desired aim of tension reduction.

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but contended as well that the development of instinctual organization through successive stages follows an evolutionary biological pattern, and that developmental patterns are subject to variations related to biologically induced inhibitions. Freud maintains, for example, that "in view of the general tendency of biological processes to variation, it is bound to be the case that not every preparatory phase will be passed through with equal success and completely superceded: portions of the function will be permanently held back at the early stages, and the total picture of development will be qualified by some amount of developmental inhibition" ("Some Thoughts on Development and Regression-Aetiology," *The Complete Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis,* p. 339). Note also Charles Sarlin's point that "the psychosexual maturity of man is *always* a relative matter, and, since all psychic function is based upon biological factors, psychosexual development is also subject to the forces of phylogenetic evolution" ("The Current Status of the Concept of Genital Primacy," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* [April, 1970], 18:2, p. 286). Sarlin adds as an extremely important afterthought that "we can only hope that even the highest state of psychosexual maturity of contemporary mankind does *not* represent the end stage of that evolutionary process" (*ibid*). Freud makes an extremely clear distinction between the biological and the socio-historical influences on instinctual vicissitudes and organization. Sociological influences become significantly determining forces beginning with the Oedipal stage, Oedipal repression and the creation of the super-ego. Because sociological influences first make their presence decisively felt through the Oedipally erected super-ego, the Oedipal stage is a uniquely significant instance where an instinct is in irreconcilable conflict with external authority. Until then, biological factors are the predominant influences of all stages of instinctual organization. Freud submitted, for instance, that "if we consider once more the origin of the super-ego as we have described it, we shall recognize that it is the outcome of two highly important factors, one of a biological and the other of a historical nature: namely, the lengthy duration in man of his childhood helplessness and dependence, and the fact of his Oedipus complex, the repression of which we have shown to be connected with the interruption of the libidinal development by the latency period and so with the diphasic onset of man's sexual life" (*The Ego and the Id,* p. 25). Though biological determinants are the principal factors influencing instinctual vicissitudes and organization until the genital stage, this does not exclude the event of pre-genital instinctual conflicts with the external world, such as anal-conflicts, and the potential effect these conflicts have on personality development.

7. *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality,* p. 136.
8. Sigmund Freud, "Instincts and their Vicissitudes," *Collected Papers,* IV, p. 65.

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The lack of complete instinctual gratification once an object has been successfully cathected by a fused instinctual drive is a decisive factor preparing the biological and instinctual bases for sublimation. Each individual begins to actively seek out a variety of unsublimated object-choices in order that the aim of post-genital instinctual organization can be consummated. Eventually, the individual discovers that sexual object-choices provide insufficient gratification. He then begins to "displace" instinctual energy in the direction of non-sexual object-cathexes.[9] The displacement of instinctual energy in the direction of non-sexual and sublimated objects is indicative of the individual's attempts to find complete and permanent gratification. The usual interpretations of Freud emphasize the causal relationship between civilization's constraints on post-genital sexual behavior and sublimated activities as though the restraints make available instinctual energy to be invested in sublimated object-cathexes. It would then follow from this argument that if these restraints were suddenly removed, sublimation would not occur. Evidence for this line of reasoning is often based upon Freud's statement that "civilization is obeying the laws of economic necessity, since a large amount of psychical energy which it uses for its own purposes has to be withdrawn from sexuality."[10] However, Freud did not stop with this rather crude explanation of sublimation, as we certainly should not.

It is also necessary to emphasize that any unsublimated sexual object tie *is by its very nature limited in the gratification it provides.* Perfectly consistent with Freud's instinct theory is the contention that the inadequacy of unsublimated sexual relationships is the result of a multiplicity of component and erotogenic instincts which, fused, seek simultaneous gratification through contact with a sexual object-choice. The inability of a single unsublimated object-cathexis to provide gratification for a fused instinctual drive, gives birth to the natural and necessary tendency of the mature adult to sublimate his energies. Thus, Freud suggests that "the sexual life of civilized man is, notwithstanding, severely impaired; it sometimes gives the impression of being in a process of involution as a function, just as our teeth and hair seem to be as organs. One is probably justified in assuming that its importance as a source of feelings of happiness, and therefore in the fulfillment of our aim in life, has sensibly diminished. *Sometimes one seems to perceive that it is not only the pressures of civilization but something in the nature of the function itself which denies us full satisfaction and urges us along other paths.*"[11] And elsewhere Freud argues that the development of "the sexual function has been accompanied by a repugnance which cannot further be

9. Displacement refers to the plasticity of instinctual drives, that is, the disability of the instincts to cathect a variety of object-choices. Cf. " 'Civilized' Sexual Morality and Modern Nervousness" (1908), *Collected Papers*, II, p. 82; *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (1938), pp. 5, 12.

10. *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 51.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 52. Italics added.

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accounted for, and which prevents its complete satisfaction and forces it away from the sexual aim into sublimations and libidinal displacements."[12] Sublimation, in a manner similar to the genital organization of the instincts, appears as a developmental stage in a natural biological process of organic maturation.

We are able to elucidate the *form* of instinct-object relations through further description of our two categories of component instincts in terms of Eros and Thanatos. During the pregenital stages of instinctual development, *Thanatos* predominates. Libidinal and aggressive component instinctual drives reach their aim of tension reduction *and* the return to an earlier state of quiescence. If death seems a rather bizarre and uncanny fate of the organism at this stage, it may be more reasonable to suggest that if this pregenital instinctual arrangement were to endure, the organism could not make progress in the interest of the mature unsublimated, aim-inhibited and sublimated manifestations of Eros. At the mature genital stage of the instincts Eros predominates. The complete elimination of tension is impossible. Whereas erotic and aggressive component instinctual object-cathexes relieved tension immediately, post-genital object-cathexes, regardless of their sublimated or unsublimated character, perpetuate some quantity of excitation and frustration. The final organization of the instincts certainly serves Eros as their subordination to the genital sphere serves reproduction, and the subsequent sublimation of instinctual drives serves Eros by devising ways of improving and perpetuating life. As the organism matures and, particularly after that level of maturity has been reached coinciding with the genital phase, the individual's ego must now turn completely outwards toward the external world for gratification. Complete gratification is thereby postponed indefinitely and the ego learns to invest instinctual energy in unsublimated and sublimated pursuits yielding the greatest pleasure. The impossibility of permanent and immediate gratification requires a subtler instinctual interaction with the external world necessitating a maturation of the ego comparable and complementary to the new genital organization of the instincts.

The ego now splits into a pleasure-ego and reality-ego.[13] The reality ego represents the individual's attempt to adapt his instinctual needs and demands to the exigencies of the external world, essentially to principles and rules governing reality. The genital organization of the instincts becomes

12. *Ibid.* Compare this with Freud's contention that "the possibility must be considered that something in the nature of the sexual instinct is unfavorable to the achievement of absolute gratification" ("The Most Prevalent Form of Degradation in Erotic Life" (1912), *Collected Papers*, IV, p. 213), and with his belief that sublimation in "the difference in amount between the pleasure of satisfaction which is demanded and that which is actually achieved that provides the driving factor which will permit of no halting at any position attained" (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* [1920], p. 77).

13. Sigmund Freud, "Formulations Regarding the Two Principles in Mental Functioning," *Collected Papers*, IV, pp. 13-21.

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subjected to the guidance of a complex ego structure that operates in accordance with the reality principle. The reality-ego has the task of discovering the "most favorable and least perilous method of obtaining satisfaction,"[14] for if the mature organism was to be continually tyrannized by the pleasure principle, the organism, in seeking "immediate and unheeding satisfaction of the instincts. . .would often lead to perilous conflicts with the external world and to extinction."[15]

What becomes of the pleasure-ego? The maturation of the ego does not suppose the simple transformation of the pleasure-ego into the reality-ego, but involves a "split" of the former. "With the introduction of the reality principle one mode of thought-activity was split off; it was kept free from reality testing and remained subordinated to the pleasure principle alone. This is the act of phantasy-making."[16] The realm of phantasy preserves the memory of the aims of the instincts during the pregenital phase. These aims are expressed in terms of wishing or phantasy and incorporate the ends of permanent, immediate and complete gratification, of tension-reduction and a return to an earlier state of quiescence. Phantasy, as the mature psychic counterpart of the immature pleasure ego, as the receptacle of infantile autoerotic wishes and instinctual aims, by being ruled by the pleasure principle, itself an expression of the Nirvana principle,[17] is dominated by Thanatos.[18] This conclusion cannot be overemphasized and I will further develop its critical significance when we examine Marcuse's conception of a nonrepressive society.

Our concern must now lie with the social manifestations of Eros and Thanatos, with their essential behavioral dimensions after the genital organization of the instincts, and particularly with the phenomenon of aggression. Though Freud argued that "man's natural aggressive instinct, the hostility of each against all and of all against each, opposed [the] programme of civilization,"[19] what is most interesting is that Freud also demonstrated that man's "natural aggressive instinct" is not naturally or inevitably *destructive*. Indeed, the vicissitudes of the instincts and the variations in the form of instinct-object relations depends ostensibly on the structure of the external world. Hostile instinct-object relations, or hostile social relations, are a form of instinctual relations that are a function of external demands and constraints that the fully matured instincts are subjected to by civilization. To complete our discussion of Freud's instinct theory, it is necessary to discover in what way it explains aggression, competition, hostility, and destructiveness,

14. *An Outline of Psychoanalysis*, p. 5.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
16. "Formulations Regarding the Two Principles in Mental Functioning," p. 17.
17. Cf. Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (New York, 1959), p. 98. Note the introduction by Gregory Zilbourg, who points out that this essay is a late metapsychological work.
18. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 109. Here Freud contends that the pleasure principle serves the interest of the death instincts.
19. *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 69.

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and the manner in which aggression is associated with Eros and the death instincts.

We can account for aggression in terms of the complex theoretical interrelationship between repression and the characteristics differentiating the component instincts. If the *demand* for repression has its origin in the external world, as it does during the Oedipal complex and the formation of the super-ego, and if the destructive-aggressivity proves to be the result of repression, then by extension, as a biological and psychological phenomenon certain types of aggression must be the result of causes external to the individual. The biological and psychological determinants of the form of instinct-object relationships are inextricably intertwined with sociologically determining factors.

It has already been noted that the activity of the instincts after their genital organization serves Eros through sexual reproduction. The displacement of instinctual energy into aim-inhibited ties is also in the service of Eros, and we can characterize aim-inhibited ties as partaking of compassion, affectation, pity, comisseration, and so forth. The displacement of instinctual drives in sublimated activities works in the interest of Eros by providing for the improvement, amelioration, and prolongation of life for the individual and the species. From this description of unsublimated, aim-inhibited and sublimated relations it appears as though the general form of an instinct-object tie in the service of Eros is free from aggressive impulses. This obvious oversimplification defies daily observation and violates common sense. We are familiar with a certain degree of aggressive energy that pervades our unsublimated, aim-inhibited, and sublimated relationships, but what is decisive about this aggression is that it is *non-destructive*. The qualities of affection, compassion, tenderness, and so on, are stronger than the destructive tendencies of aggressivity. Why is this so?

Freud imputes a *destructive* character to the aggressive *component* instincts during the pregenital phase of instinctual life. He asserts that "it may be assumed that the impulse of cruelty arises from the instinct for mastery and appears at a period of sexual life at which the genitals have not yet taken over their later role. It then dominates a phase of sexual life which we shall later describe as a pregenital organization."[20] Other descriptions of the pregenital component instincts provide additional insight into their character. At the oral phase the component instincts are particularly destructive and are marked by a "cannibalistic" urge. "The first of these [pregenital] stages is the oral, or as might be called, cannibalistic pregenital sexual organization,"[21]

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20. *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, p. 90. Cf. "An Infantile Neurosis" (1918), *Collected Papers*, III, pp. 587, 590; "Psycho-Analysis" (1922), *Collected Papers*, V, p. 119; "Anxiety and Instinctual Life" (1933), p. 565, for discussions of the relation between aggression, component instincts, and the pregenital instinctual organization.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

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alluding to the biting and chewing activity associated with oral gratification. The anal stage is essentially sadistic, and further investigations would disclose other aggressive-destructive instincts at the pregenital stages.

The form of an instinct-object relation, whether it is non-aggressive, aggressive, or predominantly aggressive and destructive, can now be meaningfully related to the process of instinctual fusion at the genital stage of development. Whereas we have already noted that the fusion of non-aggressive and aggressive component instincts during their genital organization is in the interest of Eros through unsublimated, aim-inhibited and sublimated drives, this significant change in the instinctual structural organization can be made clearer now by adding that Eros predominates successfully after the genital stage because "the discharge of the instinct of destruction is habitually brought into the service of Eros [fused with the libidinal instincts]... The advance from the earlier pregenital phase to the definitive genital one would be conditioned by an accession of erotic components."[22] In this way, Freud is "driven to conclude that the death instincts are by their nature mute and that the clamour of life proceeds for the most part from Eros."[23] Therefore, the natural *biological* progression of instinctual development permits aggression to enter into sublimated, aim-inhibited, and unsublimated instinct-object relationships; but the resultant form of instinct-object relations is that Eros dominates and the synthesized eroticized aggression means that such aggressivity is non-destructive.

Since the fusion of erotic and aggressive-destructive instincts mitigates the aggressive impulses and eliminates the destructive manifestations of aggression, it can now be shown that the reemergence of *destructive* aggression occurs when the erotic instincts are eliminated from the instinctual drive, as though a *regression* to an earlier pregenital stage of instinctual organization takes place. The instincts are "defused" and the destructive impulses are released and no longer bound and tamed by Eros. "When an instinctual trend undergoes *repression*, its libidinal elements are turned into symptoms, and its aggressive components into a sense of guilt."[24] Repression is instrumental for the reseparation or de-fusion of an instinctual drive into its erotic and aggressive-destructive components.[25] Permanent repression of Eros

22. *The Ego and the Id*, pp. 31-32.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
24. *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 86. Italics added.
25. The objection may be raised that when Freud spoke of the repression of instinctual drives, he meant the repression of object-cathexes, that is, the repression of a certain sort of idea, which could allow the impulse to be displaced in the direction of an alternative object-cathexis. While in general this is correct, it would be an error to conclude that plasticity and displacement mean that instinctual impulses are never repressed. In principle, it is also true that there are often times when the drive itself is not immediately displaced and is temporarily repressed, or does not undergo displacement and is permanently repressed. One example of this was provided above from *Civilization and Its Discontents*, where erotic drives are repressed and turned into neurotic symptoms. Often it is the case that the sublimated investment of instinctual energy in an object-cathexis does not result in the gratification of all the component instincts alloyed in the

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is the result of subsequent demands for repression by civilization through the mediation of social relationships after the Oedipus complex has passed. Thus Freud argues that "what began in relation to the father is completed in relation to the group."[26]

The process of defusion results from repression because the aggressive-destructive components must attach themselves to the super-ego so that it may act aggressively against the ego to maintain the repression of the erotic instincts. When Freud refers to the change of the libidinal or erotic components into symptoms, he is explaining the development of those neurotic disorders resulting from the permanent frustration of an erotic instinct to successfully cathect its selected object-choice. Freud concludes that "the psychology of neuroses taught us that when wish feelings undergo repression their libido becomes transformed into anxiety."[27] "Anxiety is the reaction to an object-loss."[28] And just as neurotic symptoms or anxiety is associated with the repression of libido or Eros, the aggressive components are "transformed into a sense of guilt, by being suppressed and made over to the super-ego."[29] The ego's attempts to cathect an object in the external world with a fused instinctual drive will, given the demand by the community for the repression of this drive, lead to its separation into erotic and aggressive-destructive instincts causing a conflict between the urges of the ego and the authoritative demands of the super-ego for the continued repression. "The aggressiveness of conscience keeps up the aggressiveness of the authority"[30] that demanded the repression initially. This conflict is expressed as guilt and results in self-punishment.

Defusion and guilt are only the consequence of a single repression—we have now to consider the results of accumulated repressions. Every subsequent new demand for a "renunciation of instinct now becomes a dynamic source of conscience and every fresh renunciation increases the latter's severity and intolerance... The effect of instinctual renunciation on the conscience then is that every piece of aggression whose satisfaction the subject gives up is taken over by the super-ego and increases the latter's aggressiveness against the ego."[31] The accumulation of guilt and self-punishment, that is, of aggressiveness against the ego, has placed the ego in a potentially desperate

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sublimated impulse, and that those not gratified may be immediately displaced, or they may be permanently or temporarily repressed. Hence, Freud argues in a late work, that the ego has "control over the demands of the instincts, by deciding whether they are allowed satisfaction, by postponing that satisfaction to times and circumstances favourable in the external world or by suppressing their excitations entirely" (*An Outline of Psychoanalysis*, p. 3). We should add to this that part of Freud's theory of counter-cathexis supposes that instinctual energy is required to suppress instinctual energy.

26. *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 80.
27. Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo* (New York, 1946), p. 91.
28. *The Problem of Anxiety*, p. 118.
29. *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 85.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

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situation. The anxiety reactions of permanent libidinal repressions are exacerbated in the more severe neurotic disorders, "for what is now holding sway in the super-ego," after the accumulation of aggressive component instincts have been cathected to the super-ego, "is, as it were, a pure culture of the death instinct, and in fact it often enough succeeds in driving the ego into death."[32] As similarly expressed elsewhere by Freud, the result of repeated and continual repressions is "an increase in the sense of guilt, which will perhaps reach such heights that the individual finds hard to tolerate."[33]

This guilt must be eliminated, or what is tantamount to this alleviation of guilt, the aggressive and destructive impulses which cause this guilt by cathecting the ego must be eliminated. "So long as that [destructive] instinct operates internally, as a death instinct, it remains silent; it only comes to our notice when it is diverted outwards as an instinct of destruction. It seems to be essential for the preservation of the individual that this diversion should occur... When the super-ego is established, considerable amounts of aggressive instinct are fixated in the interior of the ego and operate there self-destructively. This is one of the dangers to health by which human beings are faced on their path to cultural development. Holding back aggressiveness is in general unhealthy and leads to illness."[34] Thus the ego, in the interests of self-preservation, and to avoid insufferable psychological disorder, necessarily diverts or turns the aggressive-destructive impulses responsible for its sufferings towards the external world. However, and this point is extremely important, the post-repression displacement of aggressive impulses has been de-eroticized, the erotic instincts responsible for eliminating the destructive manifestations of aggression have been defused; the result is the displacement of non-erotic and therefore destructive-aggressivity.[35]

The destructive manifestation of aggression, as a function of repression, therefore appears to have its origin in the external world. In so far as the form of instinct-object relations now assumes aggressive-destructive characteristics, we may begin to consider the external world as a causal agent in the determination of the relative presence of either Eros or Thanatos in an instinct-object tie. This point is precisely what Freud had in mind when he concluded *Civilization and Its Discontents*.[36]

Now, note how Marcuse uses the term "repression:" " 'Repression' and 'repressive' are used in the non-technical sense to designate both conscious and unconscious, external and internal processes of restraint, constraint, and suppression."[37] Consider also the indexing of the term: "Repression

32. *The Ego and the Id*, p. 43.
33. *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 80.
34. *An Outline of Psychoanalysis*, p. 7.
35. We may recall that Freud, at one time, inquired as to how he could have "overlooked the ubiquity of non-erotic aggressivity and destructiveness and can have failed to give it its due place in our interpretation of life." *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 67.
36. Cf. *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 92.
37. *Eros and Civilization*, p. 7.

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(suppression, oppression)."[38] As it is caused by the "impact of the reality principle," repression entails sociological and political connotations. Even the most cursory reading of Freud proves Marcuse's rudimentary exposition correct, until we discover that the predominant form of repression Marcuse is referring to is the "repressive organization of the instincts" to the genital sphere under the impact of the reality principle transmitted through the Oedipal conflict. Marcuse argues that "Freud emphasizes the object of centralization. It is especially operative in the 'unification' of the various objects of the partial [component] instincts into one libidinal object of the opposite sex, and in the establishment of *genital* supremacy. In both cases, the unifying process is repressive—that is to say, the partial instincts do not develop freely into a 'higher' stage of gratification which preserves their objectives, but are cut off and reduced to subservient functions. This process achieves the socially necessary desexualization of the body, leaving most of the rest free for use as an instrument of labor."[39] As we have observed in the previous section, the genital organization of the instincts follows an ontogenetic evolutionary pattern that is biological and not sociological, contrary to Marcuse's interpretation.

Freud did, in fact, assert that repression occurs during the Oedipal situation, but he used the term in a highly technical sense. After the genital organization of the instinct had commenced with the phallic stage, the Oedipal conflict is initiated. Restated in somewhat more theoretical language, during the phallic stage of instinctual development, when the instincts begin to be localized in the genital zone, autoerotic and component object cathexes cease to become the exclusive outlets for instinctual aims and the impulses of the instincts are directed outwards. The Oedipal complex originates when the instinctual drives reach such intensity that parental authority is perceived as a threat to the satisfaction of infantile sexual wishes. The Oedipal conflict represents the first significant occasion where an instinctual impulsion is in irreconcilable conflict with an external authority. The consequences of its imposed constraints prohibiting the Oedipal drives from achieving their aim is the repression of the Oedipus complex, the repression of its instinctual designs, and the erection of the super-ego through the process of identification.

Repression is therefore necessary *after* the genital organization of the instincts, and the reality principle, which is initially encountered during the Oedipal conflict, has nothing whatsoever to do with determining instinctual organization, but influences, by means of the mechanism of repression, the *selection* of instinctual objects. Marcuse misused the concept of repression by distorting the meaning attributed to it by Freud, and by ignoring the biological preconditions present before repression can transpire. Marcuse's

38. *Ibid.*, p. 225.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

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error can be illustrated by juxtaposing a quotation employing the term repression from one of Freud's late metapsychological works cited in *Eros and Civilization* to a statement by Marcuse using repression to convey what he believes to be Freud's ascribed meaning, but which actually changes its entire definition and application: "As a rule the ego carries out repressions in the service and at the behest of its super-ego" (Freud);[40] "He [Freud] justifies the repressive organization of the instincts ['to the primacy of genitality'[41]] by the irreconcilability between the primary pleasure principle and the reality principle."[42] Since it is axiomatic in Freud's *Trieblehre* that the genital instinctual organization *precedes* the encounter with the reality principle and that the latter does not cause the former, Marcuse incorrectly argues that as a consequence of the introduction of the reality principle through the Oedipal confrontation, "the autonomous development of the instincts is frozen, and their pattern is fixed at the childhood level."[43]

By identifying the genital organization of the instincts with repression, Marcuse is inferring that a maturation process which Freud believed to be biological and irrevocable is actually social and therefore potentially subject to conscious manipulation and control. The implication is obviously that the body does not have to be desexualized. But in order to understand why Marcuse is preoccupied with desexualization, we will first have to examine the relationship of the body's desexualization to alienated labor.

Marcuse exclusively confines the life instincts, the instincts of Eros, to the rule of the pleasure principle. Those activities which involve the instinctual drives of Eros, and only those activities, are "pleasurable" and gratifying. Returning to Marcuse's equation of desexualization and alienation, since the genital zone of the body, which is the corporeal repository of the sexual and libidinal instincts is not involved in sublimation, and as those parts of the body executing labor have been desexualized or de-eroticized, work is therefore unpleasant. The body, through work, is alienated from Eros, "for alienated labor is absence of gratification, negation of the pleasure principle."[44] Thus Marcuse defines alienated labor as the repression of Eros which is experienced as unpleasant activity.

This line of reasoning will be shown to ultimately preserve a kernel of truth, though Marcuse's argument as he presents it commits three fundamental errors. First, as we have seen, the desexualization of the body is *not* a social phenomenon, it is not "socially necessary," as Marcuse contends. Since the biological organization of the instincts at the genital stage does not entail a sociological dimension, that is, technically repression does not occur, the body's desexualization is not alienating. Since it is impossible to reverse the

40. *The Ego and the Id*, p. 75; quoted in *ibid.*, p. 30.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

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genital instinctual maturation, it makes little sense to equate it with a process of alienation that could not be subjected to human intervention, as Marcuse does. Secondly, even if Marcuse were correct that the desexualization of the body is a social phenomenon resulting from repression, activities based on the repression of Eros would not be *totally* alienating. As shown above, after the instinctual genital organization has been consolidated, all non-aggressive and aggressive component instincts are ruled by the pleasure principle, and not merely the erotic instincts as Marcuse supposes. The gratification of partial instincts other than those of Eros would thus occur through their employment in work tasks. Tasks based on the repression of Eros would still yield *partial* gratification. Marcuse's oversimplified dichotomy of pleasurable vs. unpleasurable work, and alienated vs. unalienated labor is too crude to be insightfully applied to Freud's instinct theory. Thirdly, Marcuse's indictment of the genital organization of the instincts overlooks the fact that it establishes the biological and psychological preconditions for the sublimation for all intellectual and physical labor. The implicit demand for the resexualization of the body suggests a regression behind the genital organization of the instincts, making sublimation impossible.

This last problem deserves special attention. We learned from our examination of Freud's instinct theory that the unsublimated sexual predisposition of the individual prior to the genital stage was polymorphous perverse, meaning simply that sexual instinct-object relations before puberty are either autoerotic or do not discriminate between object-choices in the external world according to their sex. The mature sexual counterpart to polymorphous perverse sexuality is expressed as the absence of dominant heterosexuality, and includes bisexual and homo-erotic behavior, as well as forms of psychosexual pathological behavior (sadism and masochism) that correspond to the characteristics of the component instincts before their genital organization. In fact, Freud goes so far as to suggest that adult sexual aberrations result "from components which have come apart again in the perversions."[45] The explanation for sexual perversity advanced here argues its occurence as the result of an instinctual defusion in response to a repression carried out by the ego after the genital stage has been reached. Freud classifies sexual aberrations that emerge from repression into varieties of neurotic disorders, as they are the direct expression of repressed libidinal partial instincts being transformed into neurotic symptoms, as we have previously observed. Freud later adds that sexual perversity is also the result of "fixations," meaning that "one instinct or instinctual component fails to accompany the rest along the anticipated normal path of development, and, in consequence of this inhibition in its development, it is left behind at a more infantile stage."[46] In this case, the perversion does not result from instinctual defusion following repression, but exercises unconscious influence on the ego by virtue of its

45. *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, p. 53.

46. Sigmund Freud, "Psycho-Analytic Notes Upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)" (1911), *Collected Papers*, III, p. 453.

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never being integrated or fused into the ego-structure of the adult.

Marcuse's demand for the abolition of a condition he argues is alienating by resexualizing and re-eroticizing the body, leads to many interesting conclusions. The resexualization of the body would necessarily presuppose forms of unsublimated polymorphous perverse sexual activity that has mature adult counterparts in deviations from normal heterosexual behavior. What is most significant about this extension of sexual permissiveness is that it raises the question as to what instinctual principles rule its behavior. Certainly, a modified pleasure principle (modified by the exigencies of reality, by the reality principle) continues to operate, but does the Nirvana principle and therefore Thanatos begin to recover its lost pregenital infantile influence? In fact, it does, because just as polymorphous perverse component instinctual behavior is dominated by the pleasure and Nirvana principles during pregenital existence, both principles resume their influence on instinctual behavior when the entire spectrum of normal and pathological adult sexuality is permitted to develop. For example, when the subordination of the instincts to genital organization is in the interest of Eros by serving sexual reproduction, homo-erotic sexual behavior does not contribute to the preservation and propagation of the species through the aim of reproduction. In this manner, adult sexual perversity appears to be dominated by Thanatos, by the death instincts. We may add that where we noted in our discussion of Freud's instinct theory that Thanatos rules as long as the instincts remain unalloyed and unfused, the conclusion that the death instincts predominate during mature adult sexually aberrant behavior must be drawn from Freud's explicit association of sexual perversity with the creation of neurotic fixations when an "instinctual component fails to accompany the rest along the anticipated normal path of development" (Psychoanalytic Notes Upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia). Also, where we found Thanatos again predominating during the post-genital stage through displaced destructive-aggressive energy after a defusion of the instincts has resulted from a repression of a fused instinctual drive, Freud's association of defusion with sexual perversion forces us to conclude that Thanatos rules sexually aberrant behavior.

We begin to see that Marcuse's effort to affect modifications in key Marxist concepts, such as alienation, possesses implications that make his more creative social theory extremely vulnerable. As we have seen above, the implications of his supplementation of Marx's concept of alienation involves the rule of Thanatos. The negative features of Marcuse's reasoning totally cancel out the critical and heuristic value in Marx's theory of alienation. As we shall see more clearly, Marcuse appears to be unaware of an almost subconscious death wish infecting his notions of alienation and freedom. I propose to identify Marcuse's use of Freud's theory of the death instincts with a nihilistic strain in his thinking.

Marcuse frequently buttresses his reading of Freud with the use of mythopoeic evidence. Whereas Freud usually made empirical claims for his

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theories of human behavior, and then selected mythical figures that by virtue of their familiarity enabled his readers to clearly understand the generalizations and inferences made on the basis of his observations, Marcuse merely chooses a myth to illustrate his highly speculative considerations. His use of the images of Orpheus and Narcissus bears witness to the undisciplined character of his argumentative style.

Orpheus and Narcissus are "culture heroes who have persisted in the imagination as symbolizing the attitudes and deeds that have determined the fate of mankind."[47] These cultural heroes are meant to further suggest possibilities for freedom in a non-repressive society and to create an easily identifiable separation between the established repressive alternatives and future non-repressive possibilities, a gap that is intended to continue the restoration of the critical function of such concepts as alienated labor. Orpheus and Narcissus stand in contradiction to "Prometheus..the culture hero of toil, productivity, and progress through repression" and are the "symbols of another reality principle...sought at the opposite pole."[48] It appears that these images, Prometheus, representing the status-quo, and Orpheus and Narcissus, the possible and desirable, are determined by a rather primitive method of dialectical logic. "The Orphic and Narcissistic experience of the world negates that which sustains the world of the performance principle."[49] There is a problem associated with his explication of the mythological images he has selected, for they possess a meaning other than that imputed to them, a meaning Marcuse chooses to steadfastly ignore. Their entire realm of implicit possibilities are not honestly presented.

Marcuse's explication of Orpheus and Narcissus emphasizes only their positive qualities. "Theirs is the image of joy and fulfillment; the voice which does not command but sings; the gesture which offers and receives; the deed which is peace and ends the labor of conquest; the liberation from time which unites man with god, man with nature."[50] The images portray a new harmony between man and nature, between men, relationships that are non-competitive, non-destructive, peaceful, and that last for an eternity. But as such, they are distorted, for their negative and undesirable features are conveniently eliminated. The myths Orpheus and Narcissus have always been overshadowed by a morbid, morose and saturnine character. Orpheus seeks his lost love, Eurydice, in the depths of the underworld and consorting with the rulers of the dead, Pluto and Proserpine, makes a pact that leads only to his own demise. Both Orpheus and Narcissus are isolated, unconcerned, and asocial creatures. Narcissus rejects contact out of vanity and self-love, and is eventually punished for his indifference. But the morals based on the melancholic and pathological traits of Orpheus and Narcissus Marcuse

47. *Ibid.*, p. 146.
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
50. *Eros and Civilization*, pp. 146-147.

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disregards. He explains their darker nature and pessimism as a result of a cultural response to their seemingly utopian, unrealistic, and impossible character. Because their positive qualities are unrealizable they are perceived as threats to civilized happiness as they breed discontent by stimulating unfulfilled yearnings. Their positive qualities can be ignored by being rationalized away—if such happiness is impossible it is because they threaten and intimidate a culture based on its rejection and repression. Hence Marcuse accounts for the association of Thanatos with Oprheus and Narcissus as a cultural defense mechanism to cope with insufficiently repressed wishes for gratification. Thus, when Marcuse concedes that the two images also represent silence, sleep, night, and the achievement of paradise—the "eternal" qualities of Orpheus and Narcissus, he contends that these properties result from an oppressive culture's neurotic projections.

But the distortion of the cultural mythos is only the first step, for Marcuse then proceeds to reinterpret Freud's instinct theory on the basis of this distortion, and finally extrapolates and falsely applies the modified psychology of the instincts to social relationships. For example, since Freud's Nirvana principle represents the need of the instinct for permanent, i.e., eternal gratification, and Marcuse's mythological prototypes symbolize such permanency of happiness, social relations meant to correspond solely to the "positive" characteristics of Orpheus and Narcissus means that the Nirvana principle would begin to rule "not as death but as life."[51] Again, we are confronted with an unwitting preoccupation with death in *Eros and Civilization* that makes its way to the surface of Marcuse's philosophy through an elaborate form of circuitous reasoning.

Marcuse does not end his mythologically based argument here, however, but eventually turns to Freud for support. The cultural myth of Narcissus is extended into the realm of the biological and psychological. Narcissus is now tailored to Marcuse's needs and trimmed of unpalatable mythological details. Where Orpheus and Narcissus were disfigured to provide for a modification of the Nirvana principle, Narcissus is used once again in a comparison with another aspect of Freud's instinct theory, primary narcissism.

Primary narcissism is taken to contain new existential standards and criterion suggesting forms of instinct-object relations between men and nature. "Narcissism denotes a fundamental relatedness of reality which may generate a comprehensive existential order. In other words, narcissism may contain the germ of a different reality-principle."[52] To Marcuse, primary narcissism means that "the normal antagonistic relation between ego and external reality" would disappear, that the needs of the individual would no longer conflict with social and public needs, and could easily be provided for by the external world. However, what is most important about primary

51. *Ibid.*, p. 149.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 154.

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narcissistic behavior is that it is autoerotic sexual activity, and is peculiar to the undeveloped infantile organism. True, at this stage, the child's ego has no conception of a division between himself and the external environment, between subject and object. There is no antagonism, on the contrary, there is a oneness between the ego and its universe. The solipsistic ego is essentially dissolved into the whole. The implication is a world free of conflict, free of a separation between self-interest and general interest, free of the distinction between egoism and altruism. But again we find a distortion, because it is also true that such freedom could only be won at the expense of an inhibited development. Furthermore, even this freedom is questionable, for it could only be the free expression of an individual not in possession of an ego capable of coping with the inexorable necessities and obstacles in the external world. Primary narcissism is autoerotic, infantile and, as such, subject to the rule of the Nirvana and pleasure principles. Freud carefully chose a myth to correspond to the behavior defined as primary narcissism. Over Narcissus and primary narcissism, Thanatos prevails.

Marcuse's concern with an extended realm of sexually permissive behavior and his questionable use of mythopoeic imagery holds in common a more fundamental interest in the possibility for a socially unmodified expression of instinctual predispositions. Since Marcuse has identified the genital organization of the instincts with repression and considers the former to be the product of social manipulation and coercion, it follows that if the instincts are to regain their natural and original orientation, social institutions must allow the individual to regress behind the stage of instinctual organization in the genital sphere. Beyond this, Marcuse argues that all mental and physical activity having as a precondition genital instinctual organization is alienating, because the instinctual organization upon which it is based is the consequence of the spatial reduction and repression of the life instincts, of Eros, to the genital sphere. As an alternative, Marcuse suggests "self-sublimation," "which results from an extension rather than from a constraining deflection of the libido."[53]

The sublimation of non-genitally repressed Eros, that is, of "reactivated polymorphous and autoerotic sexual activity," would be tantamount to an authentic noetic liberation, as it would be the sublimation of free and unsuppressed Eros. In terms of Marcuse's definition of Eros as the only set of instincts subject to the pleasure principle, then sublimation would be for the first time truly gratifying and pleasurable—a "higher gratification." As we have noted above, unsublimated sexual activities would become similarly liberated by permitting sexually aberrant behavior, and aim-inhibited relations and man's relations with nature would become free by paralleling the standards set by Orpheus and Narcissus. However, Marcuse's argument was found wanting and to be in serious error. Our first section demonstrated

53. *Ibid.* Cf. chapter 10.

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that the organization of the instincts at the genital stage is in strict accord with a carefully and elaborately defined biological and psychological model of the development and maturation of the instincts. The logic of this model dictates that the organization of the instincts at the genital stage is neither repressive nor alienating. In fact, we discovered that without the completion of all instinctual stages, post-genital instinctual displacements, the unsublimated, aim-inhibited, and sublimated work of civilization, so to speak, would be biologically and psychologically impossible. Even if the genital organization could be undone, which, of course, it cannot, sublimation could not take place. Liberation, in Marcuse's terms, makes absolutely no sense, because sublimation is not based upon genital *repression*—there is no such thing. As we have learned from our discussion earlier, repression can only occur after the genital stage has been reached. Marcuse's notion of self-sublimation is an extraneous concept; sublimation is always autonomous, *though it may not necessarily correspond to self-realization*. The social role of civilization regarding sublimation is the determination of the objects to be cathected by the individual ego. Civilization creates object-cathexis hierarchies, or, what is but the same thing, a division of labor that corresponds to the range of socially required sublimated physical and intellectual labors.

Concommitant with the genital organization of the instincts is a substitution for the principles that had previously regulated their behavior. The reality principle now dictates that instinctual gratification will no longer be immediate, easily accessible, or permanent. These new restrictions only result in an *indirect* way from the *institution* of the reality principle. We can infer from the first part of our discussion that in light of the object-cathexes available to the mature adult, the displacement of his instinctual drives will be more or less gratifying. But the restrictions on the instincts result *directly* from the *replacement* and deposition of the Nirvana and pleasure principles by the reality principle. The goals of the instincts represented by the Nirvana and pleasure principles are relocated and embodied within the pleasure-ego, and continue to be expressed in phantasies. In contrast to the rationality of the reality principle that regulates the instincts after their genital organization in the service of Eros, the aims of the instincts that continue to be represented by the pleasure-ego are irrational.

Quite consistent with his interpretation of Freud, thus far, Marcuse opposes these values of the instincts still associated with the dimension of phantasy to the limited possibilities of the reality-principle. Phantasy presents itself as an unerodable and therefore invincible critical faculty. To Marcuse, phantasy "continued to speak the language of the pleasure principle, of freedom from repression, of uninhibited desire and gratification."[54] Phantasy suggests the same existential standards as Orpheus and Narcissus and as liberated

54. *Ibid.*, p. 129.

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sexuality. "As a fundamental, independent mental process, phantasy has a truth value of its own—namely, the surmounting of the antagonistic human reality. Imagination envisions the reconciliation of the individual with the whole, of desire with realization, of happiness with reason."[55] Marcuse, however, avoids mentioning that the pleasure-ego also contains the aims of the Nirvana principle. As we saw, Freud considered the pleasure-principle to be a derivative of the Nirvana principle, that is, once the aims of the instincts have been reached, immediate, complete, and permanent gratification is experienced as pleasurable. The demands of instinctual aims and the driving tendency of the Nirvana principle to return the organism to an original tension-free condition, led Freud to infer the existence of the death instincts. Thus, phantasy, by incorporating the goals of the pleasure and Nirvana principles, falls under the domain of Thanatos. The submission of the mature ego and instincts to an "antagonistic reality" *is first and foremost an antagonism to death,* whatever else it might become.

In the final chapter of *Eros and Civilization* ("Eros and Thanatos"), Marcuse analyzes the Nirvana principle exclusively but arrives at conclusions similar to those he reached when he first examined this concept in connection with the image of Narcissus and Freud's theory of primary narcissism. We find again that Marcuse persistently ignores the biological realities that Freud attached to the instincts under that principle's rule. Marcuse begins correctly by pointing out that just as immediate, complete, and permanent gratification is experienced as pleasure, the relative absence of these factors is experienced as pleasure, the relative absence of these factors is experienced as painful. The instinctual process "originates in an unpleasant state of tension and there upon determines for itself such a path that its ultimate issue coincides with a relaxation of the tension, i.e., with avoidance of 'pain' or with production of pleasure."[56] But whereas Freud makes *no* distinction in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* between the alleviation of pain or tension and the elimination of life as an aim and result of the Nirvana principle, Marcuse does. "If the instincts' basic objective is not the termination of life but of pain—the absence of tension—then paradoxically, *in terms of the instinct,* the conflict between life and death is the more reduced, the closer life approximates the state of gratification."[57] Thus, when Marcuse applies his interpretation of Freud sociologically, envisioning a new social order that appears clearly superior to the one it replaces, it is after the biological and psychological truths based on the facts of instinctual behavior have either been lost or ignored. Once these truths are properly reconsidered, the implications of Marcuse's claims, however unwitting or subconscious, can be observed to involve a definitive nihilism. "Apart from its straightforwardly

55. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
56. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, p. 21.
57. *Eros and Civilization*, pp. 214-215. Italics added.

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accepted meaning, it is *the* reality opposed to the whole of human life:"[58] liberated sexuality, the existential standards offered by Orpheus and Narcissus and the realm of phantasy and the imagination, lose their symbolic meaning and metaphorical value in the context of Freud's instinct theory.

Our critical examination of Marcuse has thus far uncovered a number of basic errors in his interpretation of Freud, and together with these flaws we recognized a set of seemingly calamitous implications that force us to discard the major thrust of Marcuse's argument. Nevertheless, Marcuse devotes considerable thought to the phenomenon of repression proper, that is, repression after the genital organization of the instincts. At this point, his analysis is penetrating useful, although it continues to stand in need of modification.

The need for repression has its origin in the instinctual drive for self-preservation. In this sense, repression is sanctioned and ordained by Eros, a point consistent with that aspect of Freud's theory that repression is an ego-defense mechanism insuring the survival of the individual by protecting him from precarious situations potentially involving extinction. The necessity of providing for the satisfaction of basic human needs in a condition of natural scarcity is one such situation that, if ignored, would obviously constitute a major threat to an individual's or society's prolonged existence. This necessity for satisfying basic human needs presupposes the production of instinctual drives precipitating the transformation of the instinct's libidinal what sense, though, does work involve repression?

We have already observed that the result of repression is the defusion of instinctual drives precipitating the transformation of the instinct's libidinal components into neurotic symptoms, and the displacement of aggressive-destructive energy away from the ego object-cathexis, which is then diverted towards the external world. Marcuse contends, reasonably, and quite in keeping with Freud, that in so far as the individual or community is required to perform necessary tasks to meet basic material needs that utilize the aggressive and destructive components of an instinct, the performance of these tasks has as a precondition the mechanism of repression. The economic necessity requiring the transformation of nature into consumable products means that the raw material of nature must first be destroyed and processed. The characteristics of Eros preclude destructiveness because it binds and neutralizes the destructive tendencies of aggression. Only the elimination of the erotic instincts through repression will free the requisite energy that determines that the form of man's relationship with nature will be primarily aggressive and destructive. Repression, therefore, releases the aggressive-destructive impulses for sublimation; it appears that the need for specific types of sublimated relationships has repression as its prerequisite.

58. Elisabeth Stopp, "The Metaphor of Death in Eichendorff," *Oxford German Studies* (Oxford, 1969), p. 67. Italics added.

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The two processes, repression and sublimation, are independent, but systemically related. Logically, the *social need* for the sublimation of aggressive and destructive energy precedes repression, but temporally repression precedes the actual process of sublimating non-erotic aggression. In other words, the sublimation of aggression is socially required, making repression socially determined. Thus one relationship of sublimation to repression is through the social need for aggressive and destructive relationships. This kind of repression may be labeled repressive-sublimation.

Just as repressive-sublimation determines one class of relations of man to nature, the form of these relations have their counterpart in relationships between men. Generally, the character of productive or work relations, in so far as they require competition, struggle, and other sorts of behavior that can be considered derivative of the aggressive and destructive instinctual components, are based upon the repression of erotic drives. The prescription for a socio-economic organization that relies in its very essence on the repression of erotic impulses and the sublimation of aggressive ones, allows us to speak of repressive work or instinctually alienating labor. To the extent that the erotic instincts are repressed and thereby go unsatisfied, labor that is responsible for this repression is also accountable for the alienation of the gratification and happiness that would accrue to an activity not dependent on repressive-sublimation. We may also speak of the repression of erotic instincts not only in terms of alienating labor, but as generating alienation between men, too. The natural unmodified disposition of the instinctual drive, which fuses a predominant Eros with subordinate aggressive instincts, leads to libidinal relations in unsublimated, aim-inhibited, or sublimated forms. Labor relations relying on the sublimation of aggression through a competitive socio-economic organization is opposed to the displacement of erotic drives and requires their continuous repression. Competitive non-libidinal relations are therefore alienated to the degree that the work performed is alienating. The satisfaction of basic needs appears to be gained at the expense of complete instinctual gratification. The liberty of the individual through his participation in labor relations "is only derivative, compromised freedom, gained at the expense of the full satisfaction of needs."[59] The problem of alienation is not only a social problem but an economic problem in a dualistic sense—the vicissitudes of the instincts, the economics of the distribution of libidinal and aggressive-destructive energy, depends upon the broader claims of economic necessities, upon material conditions. Alienation also has a political dimension. If alienation is considered as a social response to an objective set of material and economic conditions of scarce resources, the advancement and development of the productive apparatus will permit us to speculate about the creation of "relative" scarcity and its effect on changing productive relationships, the

59. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

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division of labor, and the relation of alienation to the distribution and organization or work. It should be clear that many of the concepts Marcuse works with, though peculiar to Marx's theoretical writings, such as alienated labor, are unequivocally defined by Marcuse in Freudian terms. It can be argued, then, that the normative concepts employed by Marcuse in his social theory are Freudian, though his method of historicizing these concepts is Marxist and materialist.

As we have seen, Freud realized that in view of his theory of repression, many instinctual vicissitudes are due to social influences and pressures. We saw that the instincts undergo several biological and psychological changes beginning with infancy and continuing until a major structural transformation takes place at the genital stage; the predisposition of the instincts after the genital phase still conforms to a biological and psychological model in their unmodified (unrepressed), unsublimated, aim-inhibited, and sublimated relations; the phenomenon of repression introduces a social dimension radically altering natural instinctual expression after the genital stage of development. Thus the theory of repression confirms Freud's differentiation between instinctual vicissitudes that are biological and psychological and those that are social. Marcuse denies that this distinction is made by Freud and submits that "the Freudian terms. . .do not adequately differentiate between the biological and socio-historical."[60] Marcuse is only partially correct. First, it is imperative to separate the social from the historical. Since Freud did distinguish between the biological and social, Marcuse is clearly wrong on this account. Freud believed, however, that although repression varied according to the respective occupation or role of an individual in his community, repression was an unchanging fact of life. Freud never conceived of a non-repressive society because work or other socially necessary forms of aggression seemed to be permanent and immutable realities, and little evidence was available to prompt a reconsideration of the provisional status of the reality principle. Marcuse, however, is able to overcome the social reification of Freud's notion of repression in light of economic and material developments that compel a re-evaluation in view of possible historical changes in social organization. The validity of Freud's concepts becomes for Marcuse an empirical problem, and in order to capture the historical and empirical content of the concepts of repression and reality principle, they "must be paired with corresponding terms denoting the specific socio-historical component."[61] The corresponding terms thus introduced are "(a) *Surplus-repression*: the restrictions necessitated by social domination. This is distinguished from (basic) repression: the 'modifications' of the instincts necessary for the perpetuation of the human race in civilization. (b) *Performance principle*: the prevailing

60. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
61. *Ibid.*

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historical form of the reality principle."[62] Repression, and therefore alienation, appears to possess a political as well as a social and economic dimension, which is illuminated the moment we begin to inquire into its historical rationality and necessity, given the advancement and development of the productive apparatus. The creation of a relative scarcity which is responsible for appending a political and historical dimension to social repression raises the question of the relation of alienation and repression to the organization of scarcity, the distribution of work tasks, and the division of labor.

To this extent Marcuse has produced a discriminating reading of Freud. The rationale for repression is judged to be largely based upon the need for socially necessary labor. The progress of science and technology has forged the possible means to partially eliminate scarcity and with it socially repressive and alienating work. The general political indifference to these new possibilities means that a proportionate amount of repression is superfluous, unnecessary, or surplus. Culture has always revolved around repression which has been the *conditio sine qua non* of progress. Yet, we have reached a stage at which progressive repression has become regressive oppression—the possibilities for qualitatively transforming man's relationship to nature and relations between men have not been exploited. Basic repression is the historical concept that concedes the persistence of some kind of scarcity and recognizes the perpetuation of the realm of necessity, repression, and alienating labor. But the difference between basic and surplus repression is both an index of unnecessary alienation and political domination. It indicates that, at the very least, advanced industrial civilization depends upon surplus repression, upon unnecessary work for its survival through the creation of unnecessary commodities.

The perpetuation of surplus repression and alienating labor possesses its own deadly dialectic. For as we have already observed, accumulated repression, surplus repression, means the accumulation of aggressive and destructive energy turned towards the external world. "This feature of late industrial civilization would have instinctual roots which perpetuate destructiveness beyond all rationality."[63] In *One-Dimensional Man* this insight has taken on an air of despair as well as desperation. The satisfaction of false needs through the production and consumption of commodities, which perpetuates repression and alienating labor beyond its original rationale, also releases surplus aggressive and destructive energies that breed surplus and unnecessary destruction in the sublimated forms of technological warfare and the unnecessary transformation of nature. Thus the dialectic of civilization is a destructive and pernicious dialectic: originally, repression was instumental—it provided for the postponement but eventually safe release of

62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

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Eros in a world that threatened extinction because of scarcity. But repression has become an end in itself. Its instrumental character has been supplanted by a rationality of production and consumption for its own sake. At a time when a considerable quota of repression has become obsolete and irrational, promising a corresponding reduction in aggression and destruction because Eros would once again be released "to assert himself in the struggle with his equally immortal adversary,"[64] "this is precisely what the *developed civilization is incapable of doing* because it depends for its very existence on extended and intensified control and regimentation. The chain of inhibitions and deflections of instinctual aims cannot be broken."[65] Advanced industrial society perpetuates repression so that it may perpetuate the political, social, and economic order responsible for its progress and development, but in so doing threatens its very survival through the unprecedented release of aggression that "perpetuates destructiveness beyond all rationality: progress remains committed to a regressive trend in the instinctual structure (in the last analysis, to the death instinct) so that the growth of civilization is counteracted by the persistent (though repressed) impulse to come to rest in final gratification. Domination, and the enhancement of power and productivity, proceed through destruction beyond rational necessity. The quest for liberation is darkened by the quest for Nirvana."[66] How ironic that Marcuse's Marxism permits him to reaffirm the conclusions reached by Freud, and nihilism as its proposed alternatives.

Though Marcuse accepts, indeed, insists upon, in contradiction to Neo-Freudian theorists, the basic biological nature of instinctual predispositions, why does he argue against the facts of Freud's *Trieblehre* that the genital organization of the instincts is a sociological phenomenon? There is but one answer. If the establishment of genital primacy can be historicized, then it may be interrupted and the return to the pregenital stage can be effected. Since the natural instinctual drives are socially modified, according to Marcuse, during the Oedipal stage, which is the social constellation held responsible for the genital instinctual transformation, the instinctual drives could be natural only in their pregenitally unorganized arrangement. A return to the pregenital order would mean a recapitulation of a natural biological, protohistorical and protoanthropological foundation for socialism.

As the basis for a non-repressive society, pre-genital instinctual proclivities would define qualitative change as the elimination of all aggressive orientations. This existential development, however, rests upon Marcuse's assumption that all pregenital impulses are non-aggressive. He has pursued the following reasoning to arrive at that presupposition: (1) Socially necessary

64. *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 92.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
66. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

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and surplus labor requires the compression of the instincts to the genital sphere, which desexualizes the body and turns it into an instrument of labor; (2) Since labor is ostensibly aggressive, often destructive, behavior, aggression is identified with desexualization; (3) Eros is the principally determining force of non-aggressive instinctual activity, and desexualization, which precipitates aggression, does so by weakening Eros and is thereby fundamentally opposed to libidinal rationality; (4) The only time the body is desexualized is during the pregenital period. Eros, or naturally non-aggressive behavior, must reside before the socially repressive genital instinctual organization; (5) All pregenital impulses are therefore erotic and non-aggressive. If Marcuse had not accounted for genital primacy sociologically, that is, if he had not historicized the genital instinctual organization by recourse to the Oedipal conflict, he could not have demonstrated that the pregenital instinctual arrangement, which is to serve as the biological foundation for the "aesthetic dimension"—the normative analog for Marcuse's conception of a non-repressive socialist society—is essentially free of aggression and possesses only those characteristics denoted by an aesthetic and libidinal ethos.[67]

Future attempts to define alienated and non-alienated labor in terms of Freud's instinct theory and metapsychology must begin by acknowledging, as Marcuse has not, that the pregenital arrangement involves aggressive component instincts, as well as non-aggressive erotic inclinations. It must recognize, too, that sublimation (labor) is its natural and ineluctable consequence. Through sublimation the individual gains the opportunity for gratifying instinctual drives that could not be gratified through unsublimated activities. Sublimation is not necessarily repressive either in the technical Freudian sense or in the non-technical sense in which it is used by Marcuse. It is foremost a natural and autonomous human predisposition, though occupational determination, the selection of forms of labor as

67. It may be that many of Marcuse's errors can be explained by the necessary direction that his social thought had to assume through his determined critique of the Neo-Freudians and his concerted effort to differentiate his approach to Freud from theirs. Consider this point in light of the "Epilogue" to *Eros and Civilization*, pp. 217-251. The question arises, also, as to possible changes in Marcuse's position after *Eros and Civilization*. It is my belief that there have been no theoretical advances made after *Eros and Civilization* and that his essential ideas remain unchanged throughout (the essays collected in) *Five Lectures, One Dimensional Man, An Essay on Liberation*, and *Counter-Revolution and Revolt*. The central issues in Marcuse's extant writings on Freud therefore overlap with *Eros and Civilization*. Notable exceptions pertaining to the question of further development, however, are his concepts of "repressive desublimation," which is a major contribution to our understanding of the repressive mechanisms of advanced industrial society, his explanations for aggression, particularly the notion of "technological aggression" set forth in "Aggressiveness in Advanced Industrial Society" (*Negations*), and arrived at through an ingenious application of Freud's theory of "repetition compulsion" to the contemporary social relations of production, and others that cannot be examined at this time. I would add, too, that Marcuse's very important work on aesthetics significantly improves on the weaknesses in his exposition of Freud and would temper many of its negative implications. This subject also falls outside the boundaries of this article and must be left for the near future.

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object-cathexes, is largely beyond the individual's influence, for it is limited by the relation of the individual to the division of labor, and the latter is shaped by political constraints and by the objective historical level of technological development. All these factors converge as determinants of the degree and quality of gratification to be derived from the sublimation of instinctual energy in work—they are forms of *post-genital* repression. We account for the loss of gratification during sublimation, not as a consequence of the nature of sublimation *per se*, but as a result of the repressive inadequacy and deficiency of the object-cathexes (work) that define the organized division of labor and as a result of the social arangements that do not permit the sublimated expression of socially defined dysfunctional instinctual impulses. After focusing attention on the means to eliminate socio-economic, political and historical post-genital repressive conditions, we will be left with the categories of labor and pleasure, sublimation and self-realization, and firm grounds to integrate the theoretical priorities and perspectives of Marx and Freud.

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NOTES AND COMMENTARY:

Introduction to Castoriadis[1]

by Dick Howard

The following interview is in a sense self-explanatory. But it is also limited, by the format, by the breadth of the issues covered, and by its retrospective orientation. For whomever has followed the development of the group *Socialisme ou Barbarie* through the pages of its journal; and for whomever has had the occasion to discuss with Castoriadis (or Lefort, Lyotard, Mothé, or others in the group), the Interview demands a supplementary commentary. In addition, Castoriadis' discussion of the functioning of the group and of its evolution, is admittedly and necessarily partial (in both senses of the term). In light of the work of Lefort published in *Telos* 22, and with regard also to the work of J.-F. Lyotard[2] (in *Telos* 19), the following remarks may prove useful.

As much as the French reader, the American may wonder "who is Castoriadis," and "why publish the reflections and itinerary of the leader of a grouplet dead for ten years now?" If the theoretical contribution of *Socialisme ou Barbarie* was so important, why did it remain so long in obscurity, its journal selling at best 1,000 copies, its meetings attended by a few hundred? If it evolved with the vanguard of the anti-capitalist struggle, if it evoked and thematized the new problems confronting contemporary society, if it crushingly demonstrated the paralogisms and antinomies of Marxism, showed that its destiny is precisely realized in the form of bureaucratic exploitation typified in Russia, and pointed to the *actual* creative revolt that goes on daily on the soil of capitalism—why did the group not only lack influence but die (or commit suicide, in Castoriadis' explanation) shortly before May 1968, when many of its theses were massively confirmed? And why, since May and despite the beginning publication of Castoriadis' complete works, has the movement not followed its original impetus, but returned to the petrified tradition with which, in exultation, it decisively broke in May? If its theory was so good, why was *Socialisme ou Barbarie* unable to actualize it in praxis? Why concern ourselves with the history and ideas of a failure?

If *Socialisme ou Barbarie* has through its content and evolution a message for us, it may be to point to the misleading and incomplete nature of such "pragmatic" or "realistic" questions; to uncover their hidden presuppositions in the logic of bourgeois thought. Just as Lyotard's critique of Adorno pointed to the diabolic negative dialectic as still caught up within the representation of its negate, and as

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1. The following remarks do not pretend to conclusiveness nor exhaustiveness, particularly concerning Castoriadis' later work. Concerning the latter, the Introductory remarks to Claude Lefort (*Telos* 22 [Winter 9974-75], pp. 2-30), should be consulted. On the group "Socialisme ou Barbarie" in general, see the Master's Thesis from the University of Wisconsin, Department of History, written by Alan Binstock.

2. Lyotard came to the group on his return from teaching in Algeria in 1954–55. His split with the group is described by Castoriadis in the Interview. It should be noted that Lyotard's version, as would be expected, is somewhat different—seeing Castoriadis as having "bureaucratically" manipulated the group while Lyotard was continually sent off to hold meetings outside Paris. And Lyotard certainly would not see himself, even then, as a diehard advocate of the "paleo-neo-Marxism" that Castoriadis ascribes to him.

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Lefort's polemic with Sartre and his critique of the 'progressive' intellectuals, demonstrate that a positive linear history leading to the elimination of class society is only possible from the standpoint of one removed from the ongoing process of history; so Castoriadis' taking seriously Marxism's claim to be more than just a philosophy leads him, ultimately, to reject Marxism *on its own grounds*, and to return precisely to the questions of philosophy as central to the revolutionary project today. That theory must be tied to a pay-off, defined as the elimination of the *difference* between thought and being, subject and object, theory and practice, or the inverse, that theory is subordinated to material praxis, which itself obeys laws and determines our ideological representation of it—that theory guides praxis or that praxis guides theory—both are equally one-sided reductions of the revolutionary problematic. As Castoriadis wrote in 1964, "the idea of a complete and definitive theory is today nothing but a delusion of the bureaucracy." And again, "Revolutionary politics cannot be the last refuge of rigidity and the neurotic need for security."[3]

A member of the Greek Communist Youth Party before the war (during the Metaxis dictatorship), he recognized during the Occupation that Stalinist politics was radically opposed to the project of proletarian self-liberation. Joining the Fourth International was the logical step, which meant spending the resistance years dodging not only the Nazis but Stalin's thugs as well. After the war he moved to France (to study philosophy), and quickly found himself in opposition to the dominant tendency of the Fourth, not simply on conjunctural questions but on such major issues as the nature of the Russian regime, the structure of capitalism and the problematic of the crisis theory, and the role and function of the Party. The rupture came in 1948, and led to the founding of the political group—and journal—*Socialisme ou Barbarie*.

Castoriadis wrote under a variety of pseudonyms: at first, Pierre Chaulieu, then Paul Cardan, and finally Marc Coudray. For others than *cognoscenti* of Trotskyist or ultra-left splinter groups, his person and works have remained little known. The English *Solidarity* group has translated a number of his texts, notably "Modern Capitalism and Revolution," "The Fate of Marxism," "The Meaning of Socialism," "The Crisis of Modern Society," and "History and Revolution." George Lichtheim's *Marxism in Modern France* cites (in footnotes) rather extensively from *Socialisme ou Barbarie* in the last critical chapter, not realizing that Chalieu and Cardan are one and the same person.[4] Castoriadis did not write under his own name owing first to his status as an alien in France and second, because he had to earn his living as a high-ranking official of the OCED. (Emerging from Trotskyism, often worried about their professional positions, many of the members of the group also wrote pseudonymously.) Since the demise of the group *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, and his leaving the OCED and becoming naturalized, Castoriadis has not only begun the publication of his works (including several yet incomplete or unwritten), but has also published articles on Freud (in *L'inconscient*, no. 8 [1968]), on technology (in *Encyclopedia Universalis*), on the state of modern science and its relation to philosophy (in *Eneyclopedia Universalis* and a different version in *Textures*, 72: 4-5). He has joined the editorial board of the journal *Textures* (along with Lefort), and has recently

3. "Recommencer la révolution," in *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, no. 35, p. 10.

4. For the record: Lichtheim doesn't note either that Monthal and Lefort are also the same person.

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become involved again with political writing, publishing an article on hierarchy and the division of labor in the journal of the CFDT union. Whether a new political group will emerge from his activities is as yet unclear.

In discussing the evolution of "Socialisme ou Barbarie," Castoriadis once remarked that they had "pulled the right string"—that of bureaucratization—and had simply and ruthlessly kept pulling. The locus classicus of the problem is of course Trotsky. The evolution of Russia after 1917 must be explained, not explained away. Not only to avoid the mistakes that led the revolution to a new form of domination, but also because, in the concrete conditions of post-World War II society, when the Communist Parties were at the apogee of their influence, and then again the manicheaen times of the Cold War when only two choices seemed possible, a demystification of that representation of the "socialist future" was itself an essential political act. The working class could well revolt against its immediate conditions, showing its continued willingness and will to struggle now for a better life. So long as the future was represented in Russian tonalities, the political translation of working class activity could only be the Communist Parties. Not just that the Parties manipulated the expressions of the class' autonomy—though they weren't above that either; more important, the imagination of the workers was captured by that historical *novum*, the only visible incarnation of their hopes and dreams. It would be naive of us, today, from our standpoint, to ridicule this belief, to explain it away with materialist explanations or spontaneist expectations that in the heat of action new representations will be soldered together. Though it was not thematized at the time, taking this seriously led Castoriadis—as well as Lefort and Lyotard—to their increasing stress on the function of the imagination (*l'imaginaire*) and the critique of "representational thought" in the constitution and institution of social formations.

The Trotskyist analysis of the Russian experience holds up neither before a Marxist conceptual analysis, nor before an empirical study. If Russia is a "degenerated workers' state," caught up and deformed by the reflux of the revolutionary wave, the implication is that a "workers' state" is one which has eliminated private ownership and economic anarchy by nationalized property and the Plan. We know Trotsky's theoretical embarrassment when Stalin made his radical Left Turn and introduced collectivization, forced industrialization and the Plan in 1928. The major explanation he offered, the monumental *flatus voci, Stalin*, took recourse to a psychological analysis of the bureaucratic personality of Stalin himself, fleeing the need for a Marxian analysis.[5] Trotsky's insistence on the theory of a "degenerated workers' state" points to a fundamental confusion between the juridical forms of property relations and the relations of production. Marx insisted that it is the relations of production that determine the forms of distribution and their (deformed) superstructural reflection. How, then, is it possible to claim that simply the nationalized *form*, and the existence of the Plan, constitute a workers' state?

5. See Lefort's critical study of Trotsky's *Stalin*, "La contradiction de Trotsky," which originally appeared in *Les Temps Modernes* in 1949, and is reprinted in Lefort's *Eléments d'une théorie de la bureaucratie*.

Of course, Trotsky attempted more than this, for example in *The Revolution Betrayed*. But his continual vacillation on the question of "Thermidor," his inability to examine the role of even a "good" party—his and Lenin's—in the development of Stalinism, his description of the bureaucracy as a parasitical caste and yet still, though disfigured, as a "proletarian dictatorship," as well as his moral idealism—all this points to Trotsky's avoidance of an account which would relate the conditions of the proletariat in Russia to its bureaucratic expression.

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Empirically, concentrating on the actual structure of the relations of production, Castoriadis' crucial article, "Les rapports de production en Russie," demonstrates convincingly the exploitation of the working class by the bureaucratic class. Not simply, as Trotsky was forced to recognize by 1934, that the working class was excluded from control in the state and that a new revolutionary party was necessary; more important, following Marx's own turn to the analysis of the relations of production, Castoriadis moves first through a critique of the juridical representations in order then to ask what reality underlies them, and what its adequacy is. His conclusion is that: "The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot simply be the political dictatorship; it must above all be the economic dictatorship of the proletariat, for otherwise it will only be a mask for the dictatorship of the bureaucracy."[6] This is perhaps nothing new as a general statement of principles—though we should not forget that it was reached already in 1949! More important was the path by which the conclusions were reached: precisely following Marx's example of the demystification of the juridical, and the examination of the relations of the economic to it.

A further consequence of the analysis of the relations of production in Russia is the demonstration of the central, and independent, role played by the state and bureaucracy. The critique of the Trotskyist position could have led to the theory of "state capitalism"[7]—taken by a split from the IVth International which was similar in a number of ways to *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, the Forrest-Johnson (Dunayevskaya-James) Tendency. This position suggests, in effect, that the State (or Party) played the same historical role in developing the forces of production that the capitalists as a class played in the West. Indeed, Marx's own analyses seem to admit such a possibility. The implication is that what exists in Russia is still a form—the most advanced, and presumably therefore the most contradictory form—of capitalism; and that therefore the laws formulated in *Capital*—from the law of the equalization of the rate of profit to that of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall—are still valid. But the analysis of actual conditions in Russian industry and agriculture shows that the role of the state is precisely to set these laws out of play: that a political intervention occurs which makes it impossible to claim that the state is a collective capitalist in the traditional sense, and makes it imperative to recognize that Russia presents an *historically new social formation ruled by a new class: the bureaucracy.*[8]

6. "Les rapports de production en Russie," reprinted in *La société bureaucratique*, vol. I (Union generale d'editions 10 18: Paris, 1973), p. 179.

7. Despite this criticism of the notion of "state capitalism," the term tends to reappear in Castoriadis and Lefort's work—though its meaning is never clarified. The terminological question of what to call Russia is not satisfactorily resolved by referring to it as a "new social form," or as a "bureaucratic society." And the issue is made more complex by the argument that there is a convergence between East and West, but certainly not an identity.

8. Cf. Lefort's "What Is Bureaucracy?" *Telos* 22 (Winter 1974-75). In his "Le totalitarisme sans Staline," Lefort insists that the transformation effected cannot be called "primitive socialist accumulation," as Deutscher suggests, for primitive accumulation in Marx's sense brings about precisely the establishment of relations of domination of Capital over Labor—not socialism. In this sense, Lefort uses the term "state capitalism," for he believed then that the existence of the proletariat means that Marx's vision of socialism is still possible. Lefort goes on to suggest that the relations between state and civil society in bureaucratic Russia differ from those in bourgeois society, where competition in the latter sphere maintains it separate from the state. He writes: "Totalitarianism is not a dictatorial regime, as it appears when we speak summarily of it as a type of absolute domination in which the separation of powers is abolished. More precisely, it isn't a political regime: it is a type of society—that form in which all activities are immediately tied to each other, deliberately presented as modalities of a single universe in

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The recognition of the *political* role played by the state implies a specific reading of the Marxian notion of political economy, and carries implications for the notion of revolution itself. Marxism cannot be understood as a (technical) economic theory, nor as a closed system in the classical (so-called Hegelian) sense. Marxism becomes a theory of social relations; and the critique of Russia—the demystification of the juridical mask and the uncovering of the human relations that permit the continuance of the bureaucratic form which helps to structure these new conditions—can be extended to a critique of the tendency of capitalist society as well. And, with the appreciation of the bureaucratic "string" comes, of necessity, a re-evaluation of the content of socialism—a re-evaluation nurtured and furthered by the events of East Germany, Poland, and Hungary. The notion of self-management moves from a ritual incantation to a concrete and elaborated demand for the restructuring of daily life.

The *political* critique of bureaucratic society leads to a reexamination of the *economic* base of Marxian theory. The political critique was based precisely on that economic theory.[9] The tensions and antinomies it lays bare in the area of the political rebound, putting it itself into question. The theoretical lesson is drawn in Castoriadis' article "Le mouvement révolutionnaire sous le capitalisme moderne," which led to the splitting of the group around Lyotard, Maille and Souyri. Expanded in the lengthy and incomplete article, "Marxisme et théorie révolutionnaire," which appeared in the last five issues of *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, the lesson is: there is no

which a system of values predominates absolutely, such that all individual and collective activities must necessarily find in that system their coefficient of reality, in which, finally, the dominant model exercises a total constraint at once physical and spiritual on the behavior of the particular individuals. In this sense, totalitarianism makes the pretense of negating the separation characteristic of bourgeois capitalism among the various domains of social life, the political, the economic, the juridical, the ideological, etc. It effectuates a permanent identification of all. Thus it is not so much a monstrous growth of the political power within society as a metamorphosis of society itself by which the political ceases to exist as a separate sphere" (*Eléments*, p. 156).

Crucial is the role of the party, which "is the agent of a complete penetration of civil society by the state. More precisely, it is the milieu in which the state changes itself into society, or the society into the state" (*ibid.*, p. 157). Individual action is transformed, given a collective meaning. The party claims to be a mediator; but since the society remains divided, in reality the party is just another particular among the particular interest groups, though it pretends that its decisions have universal social validity. Lefort's interpretation of the 20th Congress of the Russian Bolsheviks is that it marks the self-affirmation of the bureaucracy. During the heroic period, the bureaucracy, like the bourgeoisie of the French Revolution, had to hide its real purpose from itself, draping itself in mythical robes. A quarter of a century, and the industrialization of Russia, call for a calming of the passions, ending the violence. Where the rising bureaucracy needed the Terror and the myth to forge its own unity, its base once established, it must find forms of a legitimate control. This is all the more necessary as, in the same quarter of a century, a working class has also arisen, forged from the ex-peasantry, and working in conditions of modern industry. Their needs too must be addressed, at least partially. The limits of what the bureaucracy can do in this context are—in Lefort's interpretation of the time—those of the proletariat's need for self-management, as well as the fact that, to maintain itself, the bureaucracy establishes, politically, wage and work hierarchies which have as their effect the impossibility of making the Plan, since in such conditions it is not possible to calculate the cost of socially necessary labor power. The inefficiency of the Plan, and the new social needs of an industrial proletariat, force the bureaucracy to assert its hold through new measures of "liberalization," aimed at increasing participation in production and thus raising productivity.

9. "Les rapports de production en Russie," for example, cites as often from Marx as from contemporary statistics. Castoriadis' interpretation is perfectly orthodox—though, of course, not official—Marxism.

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privileged position from which to observe the goings-on in the world, no detached observer and no mythical proletarian subject-object of history. Neither economics nor politics has a God's-eye-view of a once-and-for-all world structure. The political rebound into the economic turns out—just as did the original economic thrust into the political—to destroy its own foundations. In one of Marx's favorite expressions, "Its victory is at the same time its own loss."

The economic critique of the political points to the determining role of the *relations* of production. What then determines the relations of production? Of course, the relation of capital to labor, of command of the means of production which, in the totality, assures the command of a single commodity, labor-power. In Marx's economic theory, once capitalism as a system of production and of social reproduction achieves dominance, capital tends to accumulate at the expense of labor, new and more 'scientific' modes of exploitation are devised; and there ensues (depending on your reading) either an absolute or relative pauperization of the working class. Of course, Marx points to countervailing forces, most importantly, the role of the class struggle as manifested in the growth of union power; and others have pointed to the importance of the relative privilege of the working class in the advanced countries due to imperial or colonial domination. Nonetheless, the point remains that Marx thought of his system as indicating economic *laws* (or, at least, "scientifically" established "tendencies"). For purposes of quantification, he had to assume a level of wages, determined by "historical and moral factors." Yet nothing in his theory permits us to fix this level; nothing tells us why the trade union struggle cannot succeed, for example, in decreasing—rather than increasing, as the theory has it—the rate of exploitation. Thus, the political stress on the creative activity embodied in the relations of production is destroyed in its economic translation into a "law" of increasing exploitation and pauperization. For the "law" to hold, the proletariat must be an object, conceived in its reified form in alienated production. That, however, places us before a dilemma: *either* the proletariat is that dead, objective material doomed to continued exploitation and impoverishment at all levels, in which case it is difficult to see the *positive* content—or even possibility—of socialist revolution and its difference from the desperate revolts of the downtrodden which have marked history; *or* it is a creative human force seeking self-assertion and struggling continually for its freedom in different socio-historical conditions, in which case the law of value with its scientific certainty of capitalist collapse falls; and with it falls the edifice of *Capital*.

There is yet a further aspect of the problem, made evident by the analysis of the relations of production in Russia but effective also under the contemporary form of bureaucratic capitalism. Were the law of value to be maintained, not simply as concerns wages, but across the board, that "law" has as its premise the existence of competition and of a free market situation. This competitive free market is that which, to give only two instances, permits the determination of the value of a commodity (in Vol. 1) as measured by the amount of *socially necessary* labor time it contains; and (in Vol. 3), which explains the difference of value and market price as determined by the *equalization* of the rates of profit. Yet precisely what occurs under bureaucratic forms is the interference of the political factor—political in the technological sense, i.e., concerned with total system maintenance—within the play of supposedly free forces. The result is a limitation on the domain of validity of economics as a science. For the Marxist used to looking at the material base of

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political activity, there ensues a fundamental *indetermination* of the process of revolution.

The political critique of the economic, like the economic critique of the political, sends us back to square one—save that we have passed "Go," and collected a metaphorical two hundred dollars. We now know that neither has a "monopoly;" both have deeper roots, a human content. Indeed, even to talk about a "content" to socialism is somewhat misleading, for it implies something fixed, out-there, which can be possessed. In fact, writes Castoriadis, "the absurdity of all inherited political thought consists precisely in wanting to resolve men's problems for them, whereas the only political problem in fact is this: how can people become capable of resolving their problems for themselves."[10] The "content" of socialism can only be the *process* of self-management, the auto-institution of society. Indeed, as events drove his political reflection towards an increasingly virulent critique of Marxism as being finally a hindrance to revolutionary activity, Castoriadis went beyond the notion of self-management of the economic process in the factory: revolutionary self-management must be total if it is to cope with the problems created by the socially inculcated tendency towards privatization, isolation and consumptive mystification typical of the bureaucratic project. A revolutionized society would be one in which the relation of the individual to the institutional is at all levels involved in a continual process of self-criticism.

In this context, the organizational question—and not simply the question of the Party—becomes crucial. Castoriadis describes the tensions that this problem brought into the group: the brief, then the permanent split with Lefort; the tensions in the sixties between the "old" and the "young" members; and the difficulty first of dealing with the numbers of recruits who came into the group, and then the problem of rendering consumers of the theory into active participants. The group never "solved" this problem, for in a sense its own principles made a solution impossible, or so general as to provide hardly any practical guidelines. Thus, discussing Lefort's scission in the "General Introduction" to his *Works*, Castoriadis writes: "The only coherent position for me was, and is, that the function of the revolutionary organization is to facilitate both the daily struggles of the workers and their accession to a consciousness of the universal problems of society. . . and that it can only accomplish this by a war against all reactionary ideological and bureaucratic mystifications, and especially by the exemplary character of its mode of intervention, which must always be oriented to the sense of the management by the workers themselves of their own struggles, and by its own existence as a self-directed collectivity."[11] In the Interview, Castoriadis gives a practical example of the need for organization and the danger of naively proclaiming one's openness, one's representativity, one's non-sectarian character. And in the same context, he criticizes the project of the ILO (ICO): it is not enough to "give the floor" to the workers; they must take it, have a reason to speak, gain a self-confidence and sense of their own value. Nor does it suffice simply to report struggles which one finds exemplary, pretending to a kind of neutrality; one chooses what one reports, and it is dishonest, and politically harmful, to hide the principles of this choice.

The practical position taken by Castoriadis at the end of the Interview remains

10. "Introduction générale," to the *Works*, in *La société bureaucratique*, vol. I, p. 38.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

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open: "to know if one can swim, there is no other means than to get into the water," he writes. If we compare his suggestions today to the position taken 25 years ago, in the editorial statement of *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, vol. 1, no. 1, a continuity in time as well as a pattern of growth stand out: "In presenting ourselves today, by the means of this journal, before the vanguard of manual and intellectual workers, we know ourselves to be the only ones to give systematic replies to the fundamental problems of the contemporary revolutionary movement... We think that we represent the living continuation of Marxism in the framework of contemporary society... The famous saying, 'without revolutionary theory no revolutionary action,' must be understood in all its breadth and in its true signification. The proletarian movement is different from all preceding political movements, however important these may have been, because it is the first to be conscious of its objectives and its means. In this sense, not only is theoretical elaboration one of the aspects of revolutionary activity; but it is inseparable from that activity... To say 'without revolutionary theory no revolutionary action,' taking 'theory' to be simply knowledge of Marxism and at most a scholastic exegesis of the classical texts, is a bad joke which only translates one's impotence. Revolutionary theory can only be valid if it develops constantly, if it enriches itself with all the conquests of scientific and human thought, with the experience of the revolutionary movement especially; if it undergoes, each time that it is necessary, all the modifications and the internal revolutions that reality imposes on it. The classical saying only has meaning, therefore, if it is understood as: 'without the *development* of revolutionary theory, no development of revolutionary action.' ... The reconstitution of the revolutionary movement will necessarily have to pass through a period during which the new conceptions will become the possession of the majority of the class. This will take place through two processes which are independent only in appearance: on the one hand, the masses will have to raise themselves to a clear consciousness of the actual problems under the pressure of objective conditions and the necessities of their struggles—even if this is a simple and barren consciousness; on the other hand, the kernels of the revolutionary organization, such as our group, will have to diffuse the new conception of the problems and continually concretize them from a firm concete basis. The point at which the two processes come together, the moment when the majority of the class raises itself to a clear comprehension of the historical situation and when the general theoretical conception of the movement can be integrally translated into directives for practical action, is the moment of the Revolution... It is evident that the actual situation is still far from this point... To say that we support unconditionally every proletarian struggle, that we are on the side of the workers at each moment when the struggle for the defense of their interests, even if we disagree with the definition of these objectives or the means of struggle, is an elementary truth which goes without saying. But to want to take every partial struggle and transform it through a superficial and sterile agitation into the general strike or the revolution in spite of all reality and all evidence—that is a task which we reject totally.... These affirmations, however correct they may be, do not exhaust nor resolve the problem of the necessary link between a general conception of the problems of the revolution on the one hand, and the actual struggles on the other.... As a function of these factors, we can define the immediate objective of this journal as being the greatest possible popularization of our theoretical and political views, the discussion and clarification of practical problems posed

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constantly by the class struggle... This journal is not in the least an organ for the confrontation of opinion among people who 'ask themselves questions,' but the instrument for the expression of a total conception which we believe to be systematic and coherent.... Nonetheless, neither on the organizational level nor on the theoretical level do we believe in a monolithism... We believe that the conception according to which the party alone possesses the truth and the whole truth, and brings it to the class, hiding from that class its internal divergences, is, on the ideological plane, one of the most important roots and the expression of bureaucratism in the workers' movements. This is why divergences which may appear on particular points among comrades of our group will be expressed in the journal, which will note the articles which express the opinions of their author and not those of the group as such. The discussion is thus free within the framework of our general conceptions..."[12]

Perhaps the crucial difference concerning the question of organization that emerges in the Interview 25 years later, concerns Castoriadis' recognition of the role of everyday life and its problems within the political function. The theory of revolution, the notion of the proletariat has altered, of course; and we will return to this in a moment. Perhaps more important in Castoriadis' development were the lessons in what today we would call "group dynamics." Remarks by both older and younger members of the group with whom I have talked at length indicate that the relations among the group tended—even as the themes of concern changed to those of a revolution in daily life—precisely not to be, as Castoriadis puts it today, those of a "group composed of individuals in flesh and blood, and not pure political consciousness." Two older members, who left the group, described their sense of relief at no longer having to present their ideas in the form of theses, as if they were participating in a debate of world-historical importance. Two younger members, who remained until the end, described the failed attempts at a revolutionaization of their own daily lives—publically manifested in one intervention: a kind of go-in at one of the first happenings staged in Paris. In the words of one, they felt that they had to write 25 pages of critical exposition of Hegel before they were ready to debate with Castoriadis! This, in spite of—or perhaps because of—the energetic, simple, and yet forceful style of Castoriadis. There was, to be sure, another side of the group's activity, which cannot be neglected. The texts were circulated, discussed, rewritten and debated again. They functioned collectively and in a voluntarily disciplined manner, each contributing a percentage of their income to the group's activity. They did have a working class participation, whose best known representative is Daniel Mothé, whose articles from the journal were successfully published in book form.[13] While many of their readers, and those who took part in their public debates, remained "consumers," the influence of the group's ideas manifested itself effectively in May 1968 and since then. Generalizing from my own acquaintances with them during the events of that period, they were the most prepared, most coherent and articulate of the militants of that time. Nonetheless, when Castoriadis tried to bring them back together during May, they were unwilling and-or unable to

12. Reprinted in *Ibid.*, pp. 132-137.

13. Cf. *Journal d'un ouvrier* (Editions de Minuit, 1958), *Militant chez Renault* (Editions du Seuil, 1965).

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regroup. A final note in this context is that many who were at best readers or at meetings, now claim to have been active participants basking in a reflected glory. Others, who borrowed much—for example, the Situationists—remain silent.

The debates over the organizational question—within "Socialisme ou Barbarie" as in general—were often unclearly and incorrectly posed. Within the problematic of Marxism, the question is irresolvable! Lefort's position[14] was more theoretically rigorous and in advance of the others: his break with Marxism also came sooner, for precisely this reason. Following Merleau-Ponty, Lefort insisted that it was the theory of the proletariat, above all and determining all, which made Marxism a revolutionary theory. Yet the revolution in practice meant two demands, irremediably antinomic: the conquest of power, and the establishment of a self-managed society. Not only the orthodox position, but that of those in "Socialisme ou Barbarie" who followed Castoriadis, insisted on the former—while trying not to avoid or underprivilege the latter. Castoriadis' position emerges even today, in his stress on the practical consequences of non-organization (whose implications go against his own theory of institutions, as we shall see in a moment). It is not that Lefort is a "spontaneist," nor that he ignores practical necessities, nor that he doubts the possibility of radical revolution (as Castoriadis suggests in the Interview). There is more at issue. It concerns precisely Marx's theory of class, and the lack of (or impossibility of developing) mediations between the elements which compose the class: structural material conditions on the one hand, consciousness and conscious activity on the other. As long as one sees the proletariat as the subject-object of history, subjective failures (lack of struggle, bureaucratization, etc.) can be blamed on objective conditions, or vice-versa, when the constitutive activity of the proletariat is stressed, its passivity can be used to account for failures. The theory of the proletariat is not simply non-falsifiable; it is misleading, since once it is accepted, the other aspects of the revolutionary project are inevitably referred to it as their foundation and sense. From one standpoint, Lefort was clearly correct; from another, Castoriadis' position must be accepted. When we encounter a debate, conducted in the rigorous terms of this one, in which both sides appear to have logic and history on their side, we must return to the posing of the problem itself (unless, of course, we are Hegelians).

Castoriadis' evolution has led him to believe that, in effect, we can be revolutionaries or Marxists: not both at once. He sketches his position in the Interview. Crucial to his argument is the notion of Marxism's "historical destiny." Marx's claim was that he had broken with the contemplative stance of previous philosophy; that his was, if one likes Gramsci's term, a "philosophy of praxis." The hiatus between subject and object, thought and action, the political and the social, was to be eliminated. This was the result, on the one hand, of historical development: the socialization of society which capitalism achieves permits the self-reflexion of the active subject. Theory is no longer the consciousness *of* society; it is part and parcel of it. As a result, Marxian theory is the consciousness of a struggling proletariat; it expresses the "tendencies" which are laid down by a contradictory social system. If Marxian theory is refuted by history, if the revolution remains at home, or

14. Cf. especially the essays, "Le proletariat et sa direction" (1952) and "Organisation et parti'" (1958), which are the texts of Lefort's split with the group. In addition, cf. his critique of Sartre, the latter's reply, and Lefort's counter. All these essays—except that of Sartre himself—are now reprinted in *Eléments d'une théorie de la bureaucratie.*

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degenerates when it does occur, if the theory rather than enlightening the masses mystifies them, then this is its most crushing refutation: it is a refutation in its very own terms. Marx is not Plato, Aristotle, or even Hegel; we can't take the good and throw away the bad; that would be to ignore precisely what, in Marx's own eyes, and in ours who want to change social relations, constituted his revolutionary contribution. We can always bring corollaries to a theory, any theory; but then it is *just* a theory, no longer a claim with praxical import.

The problem is, when we give up Marxism, we appear to be falling back into a moralist-existentialist stance which bases revolution on some kind of humanistically conceived "alienation," to be overcome through an act of will. Recognizing this has led many today to adopt a kind of structuralist Marxism. Castoriadis admits that, as his own position developed, members of the group accused him of such an "existentialist" stance. On the surface, reading the following Interview, there are grounds for such an accusation. Already "Socialisme ou Barbarie" had argued that the relation of capital and labor had to be understood socially, as one between dominator and dominated, leaders and led. In the Interview, Castoriadis explains why even this distinction is of little use today. He insists that, in the end, it is only one's attitude towards the system which makes one a revolutionary or not. Castoriadis' position is hard to pin down here. At times he sounds like an optimist French version of the Frankfurt School; and indeed, his move back to the history of philosophy, of civilization, his concern with the symbolically mediated dimension of communication, and the overriding role that the critique of all forms of authoritarianism plays in his thought, all point in this direction. At the same time, however, he rejects what he takes to be Marcuse's defense of the revolt of the outsiders as demonstrating that there is at least a spark of humanity left in this world. At first glance, here, he seems to return to the working class as the revolutionary subject. In fact, however, though his position on the working class, and on the nature of class in general, is often unclear, what emerges in his reply to a "Marcusean" position is the insistence on a rupture with the idea that there must be, somewhere, here and now, in reality, a positive subject which will change the world to its rational (and already implicitly present) form.

The rejection of Marxism, and of what Castoriadis sees as the rationality of the West in its 2500-year-old form, does not imply an irrationalism or an "existentialism." In the first place, Castoriadis' political reflection on the bureaucratic "string" leads necessarily to this critique. Logically, the bureaucratic project cannot be realized; the closer it comes to its self-actualization, the greater its irrationality. Not simply, as Weber already saw, that the bureaucratic rationality cannot develop its own ends, and calls out for plebiscitory or charismatic forms. Logically, a fully bureaucratic society would no longer be a society at all; it would imply precisely the dissolution of all social relations: if the parts are totally determined by the whole, then there are no longer any parts...and a fortiori, no whole! Concretely, the demands of bureaucratic society show themselves to be self-contradictory. In the factory, the workers are expected to be obedient cogs, patient rhythmic objects only obeying orders. At the same time, the conditions of modern industry are based on an ever-increasing productivity through the regimentation of work, speed-up and increased division of labor, while the ability of the worker to face up to the unexpected, to find those tricks, time-saving and labor-saving devices that no industrial psychologist could discover from outside the labor process becomes

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crucial precisely because of the increased (bureaucratic) rationality of the process. The development of industrial psychology and sociology in the 1930s in the U.S. is a sign that the capitalists here early recognized the role of workers' positive attitudes. And the integration of unions, the attempts to develop participation and an esprit de corps among the workers in a given firm, testify further to this. The demand of bureaucratic society is: be an object, until we need your subjectivity. The same paradox exists on the social plane, whether one looks at consumer behavior of that of the voting public (which are really the same thing, in the last analysis). We are to be obedient, to fit in, to keep quiet; and yet we are needed as consumers, and in that sphere, we are to be "individuals," to desire with infinite longing and passion. The trick can't be brought off; the contradiction is the seed of change.

The revolution that emerges from Castoriadis' analysis is not what has been traditionally conceived under that term. It is not necessary; it obeys no laws—those of structure, of rationality, of a humanity seeking to come to itself by taking possession of its alienated otherness. Socialism *or* barbarism: the group's name was well-chosen. The belief in social necessity, in a linearly developing history, in an ultimate conciliation of subject-object, thought-being, theory-praxis: these are the dreams of metaphysics, disincarnated and claiming to be realized through the bourgeois invisible hand, the cunning of reason. Marx's favorite womb-metaphors, his "it is not what this or that proletarian thinks, but what the class is and must do," or his "humanity poses itself no new tasks, but only accomplishes the old ones consciously"—these are *rationalist* positions, caught in the *representation* forged by a subject separated from the historical process of which it is inherently a part. Rationalism is a thought without origins, hiding its own situatedness from itself through the charade of Nature, History or Reason.

The upshot of this is that revolutionary struggle "is henceforth a struggle for the transformation of the *relation* of society to its institutions." Posed thusly, however, an essential dynamic is missing, what Castoriadis calls the "radical imagination" (*L'imaginaire radical*). The manner in which we have discussed the social-historical to this point has been solely epistemological; we have pinpointed it as the "condition of possibility" of human activity, and have insisted on its symbolic dimension. The question that arises, however, is what is it that lies behind the transformation of the social-historical? How is it possible that an individual or a group in a given epoch acts in such a way as to fundamentally modify the social-historical? The Marxian solution has been criticized as inadequate to account for this dimension of signification of material forms of production. The analysis must move from the epistemological pre-conditions of praxis to the social-historical specificity which, alone, can account not simply for the possibility of a revolution that would incarnate a transformed relation of society to its institutions, but accounts for its specific mode of operation. A "material" mediation is needed.

Through a series of historical examples, Castoriadis attempts to demonstrate that in fact no "rational" or "materialist" explanation can be offered for fundamental social-historical transformations such as the introduction of democracy into Greece, monotheism in a small semitic people, political thought in fifteenth century Florence, etc. These are *leaps*. History is *discontinuous*. What accounts for the leaps, the discontinuities, he argues, is the "radical imagination." The notion is at once easy to grasp and difficult to appreciate. He writes: "It is doubtful that one can directly grasp this fundamental phantasm; at best it can be reconstructed from its

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manifestations because it appears in effect as the foundation of the possibility and the unity of everything that makes up the singularity of the subject in a manner that is other than simply and purely combinatory, of everything which, in the life of the subject, goes beyond its reality and its history; it is the ultimate condition permitting the *surging forth* [*survenir*] of a reality and a history for the subject." The move to the radical imagination is a move to a ground, an active foundation, an ontological first principle (Castoriadis makes reference, for example, to Fichte's notion of the "productive imagination"). He argues that every society, and every individual, becomes what it is through the unificatory effects of this radical imagination. The form which it takes is not determined by a series of social contradictions, but on the contrary the social contradictions only appear as such for a specific form of the radical imagination. "After the fact," he writes, "we can always say of no matter what phenomenon that it too was ideally possible. That is but an empty tautology, which teaches nothing." The point, he insists, is that this radical imagination is totally unmotivated!

In the "General Introduction" to the *Works*, summarizing his own development, Castoriadis writes of the basic position—and error—of Western thought: "There is a truth to be possessed, and theory alone possesses it... There is being to be seen, just as it is—and once one has seen it, the essential, if not all, has been said."[15] Aside from the problem of the visual metaphor—and here Castoriadis' thought is clearly influenced by that of Merleau-Ponty, with whom he remained friendly until the latter's death—what emerges is not only the rejection of the subject-object dualism—now a commonplace among progressive "bourgeois" philosophers—but a different notion of Being, and with it, of revolution. Being is not an unveiling of what is already there; being is "towards-Being" (*à-être*); it depends on praxis: "every eidos is the eidos of a pragma, and the pragma is only maintained in the towards-Being by the prakton."[16] This is not existentialism; it is ontology. The course of the revolutionary following Marx has led not away from but back to philosophy, to "revolutionize" it. But the question that Marx has forced upon us remains: so what?

Castoriadis' turn to philosophy, to ontology, is perhaps best explained by one of his conversational remarks. I forget the context, but the remark explains itself sufficiently. "Everyone who claims to be a radical, and who does theory, wants to be a little Lenin. That is the problem." What *hubris* makes us think that our quest for understanding, however honest and profound it may be, should also carry with it the enthusiasm of the masses? Of course, Marx wrote that theory will become radical when it grips the masses, and to do this it has to go to the roots. This encourages us all, as we question, wonder, write. But why think that our work is only correct if it plunges directly into that "fertile soil," which Marx expected to be "struck by the lightening of thought?" Only a rationalist preconceived harmony of thought and history (or Being) can make such a claim. That the proletariat doesn't seize upon it doesn't make a question less profound, a doubt into a neurosis, a theory into a bad utopia. Were the proletariat so smart—not to say so unified—then it would be, as my father used to say, equally rich!

Without losing a bit of its militancy and self-assuredness, Castoriadis' theoretical position has become more humble. Discussing the practical tasks in the Interview, he

15. "Introduction générale," *op.cit.*, p. 50.
16. *Ibid.*

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recognizes that "the workers will struggle or won't struggle, the woman's movement will develop or won't develop, high school students will continue or will return to the cradle: beyond that, we can do nothing"—save rejoin those who pose the same questions as we, share the same problems and doubts. Of course, one does precisely what the Editorial of the first issue of *Socialisme ou Barbarie* suggested: supports the struggles. But to claim that one seeded them is nothing but an immaculate conception. Material contradictions exist, they will explode from time to time. But the capitalist system was built precisely upon these contradictions. To escape from it—to revolutionize it—one cannot simply bank on the contradictions which are always there; the question is to find—not to decree, or ratiocinate—the social forms which permit the transcendence of the capitalist system of representative thought.

Again, it is not pure will, existential choice, to which Castoriadis takes flight. Call it micro-analysis, phenomenology, even symbolic interactionism, if you will. The contradictory dream of bureaucratic rationalism already pointed to the locus of the analysis. Concretized, it becomes the problem of institutions, from the dyad to the society. What is my relation to the other, to my family, society and the state? How do I live the past? Beyond the material conditions in which I find myself, what are the symbolically mediated structures which make me this unique, yet social, individual? [17] How do I live the Other—the social, individual or historical Other? How does the Other constitute me, and vice-versa?

This is not the place to pursue the philosophical foundations of Castoriadis' politics—all the more so since they are still being elaborated. In a series of fundamental articles, mentioned already above, Castoriadis has attempted to show, by means of a critique, the untenability of the received rationality. Whether it be quantum mechanics or psychoanalysis, legal theory or biochemistry, the antinomies re-emerge. To track them down has more than academic interest. But it has no "payoff" in the accepted sense; it will reveal no keys to history.

That the same paradoxes emerge in the hard and soft sciences as in the revolutionary project gives food to thought. This is Castoriadis' point. He talks of the need for a social revolution that will establish a changed relation of people to their institutions. Institutions institute; they are not simply instituted, by conscious plan or material conditions. They have no necessity. Revolution, for Castoriadis, signifies a changed relation to our institutions and to ourselves as instituting. In this sense, despite his skepticism about Lefort's position, Castoriadis and Lefort return, by different paths, to the commonality from which their evolution began.

The evolution of Castoriadis' thought over the past quarter century has been marked by its consistency, rigor and change. We can read him today with profit. His confrontation with Marxian theory took place in the context of a praxis which, though not crowned by quantitative "success," is nonetheless important for us to measure. We are not functioning in a France dominated by a Communist Party, nor in the context of the immediate post-war years. Our task is to introduce a critical theory and attitude towards contemporary society and its own self-understanding.

17. It could be argued that in the Marxian theory of Marx, such questions—particularly the role of the symbolic—are in fact accounted for. Marx understands objectification, the foundation of the historical, as containing and constituted by four factors—material production, consciousness, language and sociality. It is the neglect of the latter three factors, due to the specific conditions of nineteenth-century capitalism whose universe of signification *was* in fact exhausted by the economic, that forces us to revise Marxism today.

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We immediately reach for Marxism—this was a major reason for the debâcle of SDS at the end of the 1960s! Is there not another way, one which avoids the pitfalls that our recent experience, and the reflections of Castoriadis, point to? There is no way of saying in advance that an alternative will "work"—but is it a "workable ideology" that we really need? Today, in a society ridden by latent and open strife, whose economy is stuttering and whose economists and leaders stand naked in their contradictions for those who would see—today it is not a new belief (or an old one) that is necessary. It is not science, revolutionary technology, that will help; nor is it appeal and exhortation. Rigor, honest exposition and self-awareness are what count. These are not tasks for an individual alone; they demand collective work, collective activity, collective development. Castoriadis offers no formulae; he throws us back on our own, back together. The example he offers is an important one. It shows that uncompromising questioning opens onto an understanding of the world of today. That a small group, isolated and not knowing the fundamental texts of critical Marxism but simply reflecting on theory and practice, could come to results which are now, a quarter of a century later, generally accepted, should encourage us and give food for thought.

*An Interview with C. Castoriadis**

Historical Introduction

Socialisme ou Barbarie grew out of opposition to a position which had developed in the mainstream of the *Parti Communiste Internationale*, the French Trotskyist party, in the summer of 1946. I had developed a critique of the Trotskyist conception of Stalinism in late 1944-early 1945, starting with my experience of the Stalinists' *coup d'état* in Greece at that time.

For Trotsky and his followers, the Stalinist parties in the capitalist countries had ultimately sided with the bourgeois order (at least since the time of the Popular Fronts and the Spanish Civil War). They came to represent nothing more than a new edition of reformism and, for the Trotskyists, we were back to the essence of the Leninist analysis and critique of classical reformism.

In this perspective, if Stalinists ever participated in a government they could do so only in the manner, and with the objectives, of a reformist party—hence preserving a bourgeois regime during a difficult phase of its existence.

However, it was evident in Greece in 1944 that this was not the essence of the problem but an attempt by the Communist Party to seize power and institute a dictatorship, something it already practiced in most of the country during the last phase of the war.

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* This interview was carried out January 26, 1974. Translated from the French by Bart Grahl and David Pugh.

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Although the insurrection in Athens failed (December, 1944), we know what happened during the same period in Yugoslavia and other Eastern European countries in the months that followed.

This experience showed the absurdity of the Trotskyist "tactic" which consisted of support for the Communist Party and the "push" to take power. The word of the day for the Trotskyists was a "Parti Communist—Parti Socialist—Confédération Générale du Travail" government, and, unless I am mistaken, it remained that.

This tactic was based on two ideas, one as illusory as the other: that the Communist Party would be as unstable in power as it had been at the time of Kerensky, for example, and that the contradiction between the motives of approval or support which the masses accorded the Communist Party (the supposed desire for a revolutionary change in regimes) and the Party's political reality (the supposed desire to preserve the bourgeois order) would erupt with the Party's accession to power.

But, once installed in power, the Communist Party is anything but unstable. That is, we would no longer even be there to discuss it since invariably the first act of the Party is to eliminate any revolutionaries it can lay its hands on. Furthermore, the "contradiction" between the Party's politics and the masses' will for change never appears. Rather, the Party effectively *transforms* the regime by expropriating the traditional bourgeois, "planning" the economy, etc., and some time passes before the masses clearly realize that they have only changed exploiters.

All this leads to reopening the "Russian question" and rejecting Trotsky's conception whereby the Russian bureaucracy is only a parasitic and transitory stratum which would maintain itself in power only in relation to the unsteady balance within the world as a whole—between international capitalism on one side and revolution on the other. From there, according to Trotsky's prognosis, the war would provoke the fall of the Russian bureaucracy and it would terminate in an international revolution or a victory by capitalism (implying even the restoration of capitalism in Russia). This prognosis, completely refuted by the results of the war, was not just journalistic talk. It included all the elements of Trotsky's conceptions of the bureaucracy and of the contemporary era. The fact that after the war the Russian bureaucracy was not left weakened but considerably strengthened, that it expanded its power over all of Eastern Europe, that regimes identical to the Russians' in all regards were being established under the shield of the Communist Party, necessarily led to the realization that the bureaucracy was not a "parasitic stratum." Rather, it was a completely dominant and exploiting class which, moreover, could have been confirmed by a new analysis of the Russian regime on the economic and sociological levels.

When I came to France (at the end of 1945) the *Parti Communiste Internationale* was preparing the second congress of the "Fourth International." The primary topic of concern was Russia and Stalinism. I participated in some preliminary discussions where I developed the ideas summarized above. During one of these discussions I met Claude Lefort who was becoming increasingly uncomfortable with the official line of the *Parti Communiste Internationale*. We quickly realized the similarity of our views and, with some other friends, we established a minority group within the *Parti Communiste Internationale*. The first documents of this position were distributed in the *Parti Communiste Internationale* in August, 1946. By 1947, when it had reached its maximum influence following the war (some 700 activists in France), our group was comprised of about twelve associates. After 1947, the *Parti Communiste*

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Internationale entered one of its periodic phases of fragmentation. On the one hand, its right wing quit to join the *Rassemblement Démocratique* of Rousset and Sartre; on the other, the militants who remained were noticeably less and less able to question or change the party ideology (and when they finally came to understand the absurdity of this ideology, they simply dropped all political activity). At the same time, certain events—the strikes in France in 1947, the evolution of the Eastern European countries, the beginning of the cold war—as well as our own theoretical development, led us to see the enormous distance which separated the Trotskyist position and what was truly relevant to the class struggle, contemporary world history and revolutionary theory itself. From beginning to end, the analysis and critique of the Russian revolutionary experience required a fundamental reconsideration of one question: "What is socialism?" Now, this reconsideration necessarily started with the idea of autonomous action by the proletariat as the central theoretical and practical idea of the revolution. It ended with the definition of socialism as worker management of production and the collective management of all social activities by everyone who participated in them. This was a long way from the Trotskyists' conception of "nationalization" and "planning" as central objectives of the revolution and of the integral power of the party as instrument of their realization.

In the summer of 1948 we decided to leave the *Parti Communiste Internationale*. We were debating a date and means for leaving when, as if by chance, one of those events occurred which finalizes a situation: the break between Tito and the Cominform. To the last man, the Trotskyists began to cry out: "viva Tito, viva the Yugoslavian revolution!" Then they wrote to the Yugoslavian Communist Party proposing the "*Front Unique* (sic)." Remember the Trotskyist stance—they were writing that Yugoslavia (like all the rest of the Russian satellite countries) remained an "essentially capitalist" country. This was because the Communist Party had not nationalized everything on the first day; because they maintained some puppet ministers in the government who did not formally belong to the Party (generally only sub-ministers) and represented elements created and completely controlled by the Stalinists (as perhaps, one day, the "radicals of the democratic progressive popular left" will be in France). The absurdity of this reasoning was obvious. What does it matter that some percentage of production had not been nationalized, when the essentials of the economy had been and the remainder of this percentage diminished regularly month by month? And how can you talk to people who thought that once everything was nationalized you had the essence of socialism? They viewed the attempts in the East only in terms of this dilemma—is it socialism (identified with nationalization, etc.) or is it capitalism (identified with traditional private property)? But the question could not be posed in these terms. It was a matter of realizing that these countries were being structurally assimilated by the Russian regime each day. And, once the Communist Parties were solidly implanted in power, they installed their own men everywhere creating a new management apparatus in which a new dominant and exploitative stratum rapidly crystallized. And finally, this process was not only compatible with "nationalization" and "planning," but found a perfectly adequate form therein. And, what would the *Front Unique* mean: on the one hand, a Stalinist party in power with an army and state budget at its disposal, and, on the other, a few dozen Trotskyists in Paris? That was the comic side. But, for us, the general effect was a final disenchantment with Trotskyism. We left the *Parti*

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Communiste Internationale, formed an independent group, and published the first issue of *Socialisme ou Barbarie* in March, 1949.

I do not want to give a history of the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* group from start to finish. To do that correctly would require a detailed "case history," an in depth examination of all its aspects: the rejection of traditional conceptions, the life of a small revolutionary organization over a period of eighteen years, its "ideology" and its "everyay" life, the people who composed it, etc. This would take too long and there are more urgent tasks. I will only try to describe certain aspects, keeping in mind that I have been constantly and deeply involved. I am not neutral and, without a doubt, I never will be.

We can mark the history of the group in periods, the first phase running from 1949 to 1953. Remember the social, political and international context. In 1949, the cold war was developing; in June, 1950 the Korean War broke out. People were frozen, living the situation as if the Third World War were about to begin.

After the great strikes of 1947 there were very few struggles in France. The 1948 miners' strike, the last great conflict of the immediate post-war period, was under the complete and total control of the Stalinists. During this period, the main audience of the group and of the journal was formed by groups of the old, radical left: Bordigists, council communists, some anarchists and some offspring of the German "left" of the 1920s. Most of these groups broke off or disappeared rather quickly (the most important among them, the Bordigists, joined *Socialism ou Barbarie* in 1950). As for the life of the group, it was marked by two long discussions which dealt with the "question of organization." The second ended in a split (which was of short duration) with Claude Lefort and some other members. Starting in 1950 the group suffered a growing isolation. By the end of 1952 it was reduced to about ten members and publications were infrequent and sparse.

But then, through the strange power of history, the scene changed. The Korean War ended, Stalin died, the East Berlin workers revolted, the whole public sector in France came out on strike. The life of the group was revived, some new people joined, the contents improved and publications became more frequent. Mothé, who came to the group in 1952, did some systematic work at Renault. With a group of factory workers he published the *Tribune Ouvrière*, distributing a few hundred copies inside the factory. Simon, for his part, played an important role in an employees' movement in a large insurance company. They established a "committee" and broke with the union. Contacts with other workers were established and some correspondents appeared in the provinces. Furthermore, the Twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, Pozan, and, of course, the Hungarian revolution and the Polish movement, considerably stimulated the life of the group. All this worked to confirm our position and increase, significantly (everything is relative) the circulation of the journal as well as participation in the public meetings we held in Paris. Soon each issue sold a minimum of 700 copies (up to 1,000 for certain issues) and nearly 100 people outside of the group came to our meetings. You have experienced the period after May, 1968, when there was a real mobilization of the public left. You should realize that during our desert crossing we held "public" meetings at *la Mutualité* with about twenty people from outside of the group.

The Algerian War began in November, 1954. The Mollet government (beginning in 1956) began a partial mobilization to send troops to Algeria. The soldiers who were called up demonstrated and stopped the troop-trains. Economic disorder grew

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and the movement became more vocal. In the autumn of 1957 there was considerable unrest in the factories—the situation was unstable and open. At this time we published "*Comment Lutter?*" (cf. ed. 10:18, 825) which had benefitted enormously from discussions surrounding a project I had drafted with members of the group and some other people involved in activities not pertaining to the group, but who had come to some meetings and discussed it with us. No important activity developed during the winter 1957-58, and then, suddenly, it was May 13 and DeGaulle came to power.

At this time the group had about thirty members who paid dues regularly, participated in the meetings and performed tasks that were collectively decided. The events led several dozen sympathizers to join and organize with us. This raised the "question of organization" again, and this time, in practical terms. It became clear that our method of operation for thirty members (anyone who wanted to could express themselves at the weekly meetings) would no longer work with one hundred members. A general meeting of this size almost inevitably becomes a general assembly where the loudest voices speak and others listen. Moreover, such a meeting can decide nothing regarding the practical tasks for those in the group. Thus, it was necessary to "divide up." But, if a group divides up, it must also re-establish the whole. The question was, then, how? Under what forms.?

The conflict on organization, which was always there but had not explicitly appeared in the discussions since 1950-51, surfaced again. The discussion continued for a while and then ended in a split in September, 1958. One part of the group (Claude Lefort and Henri Simon were the spokesmen) left *Socialisme ou Barbarie* and formed another group, *Informations et Liaisons Ouvrières* (later, *Informations et Correspondence Ouvrière*). Their position was formulated in Lefort's essay, *"Organisation et parti,"* published in *Socialisme ou Barbarie* 26 (reprinted now in Lefort's book, *Eléments pour une critique de la bureaucratie* [Droz, 1971]). As for the majority, it was reconstituted around the essay, "Prolétariat et organisation" (published in *Socialisme ou Barbarie* 28 and 29, and reproduced in the second volume of *L'expérience du mouvement ouvrier*, to appear in 10:18 next March [1974]).

In this essay, I tried to go beyond an "external" critique of traditional organization and its activity. It was not just that Bolshevism set itself up as the "director" and that the party was subjected to an authoritarian bureaucratic regime. But, in doing that, it adopted the capitalist model of organization in the most general sense and brought it into the heart of the workers' movement (as was also the case among different variations in Social Democracy). The organization was divided into directors and performers and it played the role of director with respect to those who performed the revolution, the proletariat. The *type of work done* by the party activists was that of performers. And, in its ultimate but most important aspect, the conception of revolutionary theory and its contents (under the direction of this organizational model and the kind of activity implied) remained essentially capitalist—and that as early as Marx himself.

This analysis and critique were made during an effort to define revolutionary organization anew. It was necessary to repudiate the capitalist model in all its aspects and implications. For a beginning, this could only be accomplished by drawing inspiration from the creations of the working class during the last 150 years. It goes without saying, but it was said, that the revolutionary organization should not be the

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"director" of the working class, but an instrument—one of the instruments—of the revolutionary struggle. And that it should draw inspiration only from the "collective spirit" of the proletariat and the organizational forms they had created. Thus, it should regulate its internal structure and function on the basis of the principles which underly the organization of the soviets or the workers' councils (sovereign general assemblies and, as often as possible, in any cases where a decision of the general assembly is not possible, committees of delegates chosen and continually subject to removal). But, beyond some changes in organizational type, this was the whole of the traditional conception which was profoundly on trial.

Let's begin with the point which played a very large role in the 1958 split, even though it has not been made explicit as such. In my eyes, Lefort's and Simon's positions ended up, without saying so, in denying or rejecting the political dimension of the organization. If by "political" we understood what the French Communist Party or the Trotskyists understood by political, then we would have been in accord. But, obviously, that was not the case.

The question of politics is the question of society as a whole. And, one of the tasks of the organization is to continually hold this question open before the proletariat. I do not see how one can consider himself a revolutionary while evading that. We claim to be supporters of worker management (or self-management, as people call it now). Well, what does this mean, what does it imply? Let's suppose that the workers take control in each individual factory. The fact remains that all factories are directly and intimately interdependent, and the integration of their activities must be accomplished in one way or another. If it is not done in a revolutionary manner, then inevitably it will be done bureaucratically. Which means, by universal specialists who will say, for a start, "You take care of your particular corner, we will take care of the general coordination." Obviously, if that occurs, local "management" will lose all meaning very quickly because the integration of diverse "social units" at all levels (businesses, localities, types of activities, etc.) cannot be miraculously resolved in a vacuum. Furthermore, this does not involve an exterior and secondary aspect whereby the repercussions of each unit remain circumscribed and limited in importance. Hence, it is absurd to think of socialist factories or simply self-management in the context of bureaucratic "coordination" of the economy and society.

On the other hand, inasmuch as people are to some degree conscious of the problem, all particular attempts to confront the question of society as a whole, social organization as such, have been stymied either because people doubt their capacitiy or because they doubt the objective possibility of accomplishing anything. Independent of any other consideration, it is clear that the workers cannot "take power" in the factory unless they have already considered in some way, be it obscure, misconceived or ambiguous, the question of power at the general social level. I am not placing myself just in the perspective of "power relations;" I do not mean—the truism, illustrated again in the case of Lip—that the power of the workers in the factory can be liquidated, slyly or brutally, by the bourgeois if it remains "power in the factory." Rather, I mean to go beyond that point: the people who struggle must necessarily ask themselves, "what happens later on at the societal level?" If this question is not made explicit, as much as is possible, this factor will only radically impede the movement at one point or another. The task of the revolutionary organization is to aid the workers in clarifying and explicating this question and showing

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that it is not a *fatal* dilemma. That is, either centralize "power" apart from the masses, and thus bureaucracy and a quick return to a variation of the way things were, or the movement fails, period. Hence, the job of the organization is to show that a socialist organization of all of society, and not just the factory, is possible.

But there is another, more important aspect to this question: to challenge, implicitly or explicitly, the political dimension of the existence and activity of the organization. Beginning with the principle that the organization should only express the preoccupations of the workers *hic et nunc* and, that *now*, the workers are not placing themselves on this ground, is only to repeat the premises of the Leninist position in *What Is to Be Done?* (even if one severely criticizes it in other aspects). That is, one denies a connection or internal relation between the situation, the "immediate" struggles of the working class, and the question of society as a whole. But, this connection, this relation, exists and it is of prime importance. Such and such a struggle in a factory, such and such activities of various categories, these themes of "everyday" preoccupations can contain and, generally do contain (even if only potentially) much more than would appear superficially. In an embryonic form, they contain the problem of the established order by virtue of its generality. Though implicit, it is complete through its implications and consequences. Hence, initially it is a question of extricating this meaning, of explicating the elements of the dispute with the established system, from all "particular" struggles, activities, etc. Moreover, this includes those elements which always remain hidden from the participants themselves. This happens because these meanings, these embryonic elements, are repressed by the whole contemporary social structure; by the prevailing ideology, by the untiring labor of traditional organizations and, of course, the psychological internalization of this structure by individuals: the self-repression of new meanings which they have created without even knowing it.

It is an easy thing to say that the organization should distribute descriptions and accounts of exemplary struggles and avoid asking such questions as which struggles are exemplary and why. And, who is to decide? Some struggles are exemplary but only in relation to the potential meaning which goes beyond the immediate and apparent terms. That is, not only are the issues produced equivalent to other similar cases, but the implications go far beyond what seems to be the problem in their initial unfolding. A strike committee which is elected and subject to removal is not significant just because all strike committees should be elected and subject to recall. It becomes significant because of its establishment and the relations it maintains. The mass of strikes are *shattering* the principles of political philosophy which have existed for twenty-five centuries and creating new ones. But, to be sure, we are the ones who say that, and we can only say that starting with our conception of the whole. In this regard, not only should we openly take responsibility for this conception, but it seems to me dishonest and manipulative not to make it explicit.

If this is true, then it becomes evident that the traditional distinction between the "immediate" and the "political" is suspect. Moreover, it opens a new path which allows us to go beyond traditional views of revolutionary theory and its mode of elaboration. The need for such an elaboration is obvious. Besides which, it is clear that the revolutionary organization cannot and must not be a CNRS or an Academy of the Revolution. Theoretical activity is governed by a preliminary decision concerning the question, *what is important?* To this we can respond by giving a central place to whatever is stirring among the general population, to whatever

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preoccupies it (all of which remains suppressed). To pass beyond the traditional theoretical conception, including its contents and style of activity, demands a change in focus of preoccupations, central themes of theoretical activity, as well as a change in method and elaboration. If this is not to remain the isolated occupation of a separate category of specialists, and all that it fatally implies, revolutionary theory should be worked out only in a situation where spokesmen and the larger population can mingle and cooperate. Also, an analogous circuit of cooperation and exchange must be instituted between the organization as such and its surrounding milieu as well as the general social milieu.

In early 1959 we started publishing a mimeographed monthly called *Pouvoir ouvrier*. More than half of it was dedicated to a format entitled "the workers' voice" in which we published everything that was sent to the journal. But, to really allow the workers to speak is an enormous task: it is not sufficient to "let" them speak; rather, it is necessary that they *actually* do speak. To gather people together and tell them, "you are free to say whatever is on your mind—there are no taboos, no authority here, nothing is considered trivial or without importance," amounts to very little. It is even less meaningful to provide a section in a publication called "the workers' voice" and invite them to write. People do not express themselves. Society has always attempted to persuade people that they have nothing of importance to say —only specialists in politics and economics, like Giscard Marchais or Mendès-France, know what is important and have something to say (generally, pseudo-specialists in pseudo-sciences). This effort has succeeded and people say, "my concerns are not important, they are only petty, personal things; as for larger societal affairs, I don't want to say anything because I don't know anything." We have to destroy the effects of this work, reverse the signs of value, communicate the obvious idea that the contents which fill the papers, radio and television are of almost no importance and the preoccupations of the general populace are the *sole* important matters from the social viewpoint.

After the split, Lefort and Simon formed a group and put out a mimeographed publication called ILO (*Informations et Liaisons Ouvrières*). Later on, Lefort left the group. Simon continued, and the group and publication became known as ICO (*Informations et Correspondance Ouvrières*). The founders of *Informations et Liaisons Ouvrières* had a more than restrictive, and in my eyes, profoundly contradictory conception of revolutionary activity; the only real task of the group was to collect and disseminate information. The basis of this attitude was an interpretation of the idea of the autonomy of the proletariat which implied the refusal to intervene and bring in whatever might be "foreign" to the proletariats' experience. However, I think that this position remains a prisoner of the same problematic within which bureaucracy is the other extreme: we have our ideas and impose them on others—or else (the simple negation of the preceding statement on the *same* grounds); we know what we think but we cannot express our ideas because that would be imposing them on others (and alter their "autonomous" development). In fact, the idea of autonomous evolution of a certain group or class means nothing. Their development is not "autonomous" in the absolute sense. It occurs in the midst of a struggle and a social dialectic where capitalists, Stalinists, etc., are continually involved. This could only result in the absence of only one voice from the concert—the voice of the revolutionaries. It is one thing to condemn the concept of the party

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as "director" but quite another to reject one's responsibilities and say: "our sole viewpoint consists of placing our publication at the disposal of whomever wants to speak."

It is irrelevant to remark that I see things through my own eyes; in any case, the texts are there for anyone who wants to read them. I think my criticisms have been confirmed by the sequence of events. I would like to illustrate this more concretely with another problem which is important and always current.

One of the implications of the position of the founders of *Informations et Liaisons Ouvrières* is that there is no question about stating in a clear and resolute way who are members and who are not, the reason being that there is no *basis* for such a distinction. Indeed, the quarrel over the question of organizational membership has some sinister historical overtones. The split between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks was based on Article I of the statutes: who is a member? The Bolsheviks wanted to set a limit and accept as members only those who worked *directly* under the organization. The Mensheviks, however, wanted to consider as members those who were in accord with the party program and did any work for them. The terms in which the question was posed at that time and the manner in which it developed no longer exist. But, we cannot avoid it—the question itself continues. Let's suppose we want to suppress it. There is a group established on the basis of an affinity of ideas and it begins its little routines. The ten or fifteen participants have known each other for some time. They are united, they have come to like the smell of each other, they are isolated from all outside contacts—there is no problem. Then one fine day—let us say around May 1968—about a hundred people (no matter who they are) converge on the meeting and ask, "Is it open? Can anyone come in?" The response is "Yes, of course." Then, those who are supposed to present the agenda for the meeting say, "Today we've decided to discuss subjects A, B, and C." Cries from the floor: "What's the story? Who's the bureaucrat? Agendas are bureaucratic inventions!" And on and on it goes... It remains for the ten or fifteen original participants to leave quietly and go gather in a closed room, accused by the others (rightly so) of deceiving the world by saying their group was "open."

We cannot resort to a notion of marginal return and deny the problems at issue here. If revolutionaries want to work together, this means that as long as there is a degree of accord among them, they take upon themselves, collectively, a certain number of tasks. They alone decide what tasks, how they will be done and by whom. Indeed, it is essential to break the absolute opposition between the organization's militants and a formless morass of sympathizers good for indoctrinating, fleecing, buying coffee or addressing the mail. We must get rid of the distinction between the organizational core and "sympathizers" by organizing frequent meetings (where everyone is on the same footing) and invent activities which can in fact be common. But this cannot be done if the militants, who continually take on the particular tasks which mark the collectivity, also decide the orientations and activities themselves.

When people claim to suppress the division between militants, the organization members, and others, by refusing to say who is a member of the group and who is not, they avoid these real difficulties in thought only. The fact is, there are some people for whom the work in a collectivity based on a revolutionary project is very important (for them it is a project which ends only with death). However, there are others who, at a given stage in their life, become interested and would like to

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participate partially but do not make it the center of their life (which does not lower them in our eyes). The co-existence of these two kinds of people is a fact which must be dealt with. We do not face up to this by saying that the first type of individual does not exist because he should not exist. That only ends in a hypocrisy and manipulations of another type. These individuals, the militants, or whatever name they are dressed up with, are always found there. They do things quietly such that they do in fact have power. But this power is mysterious because formally their importance is no greater than anybody else's. In fact, they have power, concealed by the elimination of the explicit question of power. This is an unfortunate situation, not only because it hides their power, but because it hides *the question of power* which is infinitely more serious.

One last point to finish with the 1958 split. It seems to me that Lefort's side was overdetermined—I'm interpreting this, it was not written at the time—by a conception he had already formulated earlier and only subsequently became expressed. I would sum it up pretty much in the following manner: we cannot aim at a radical revolution. Indeed, there are struggles which upset the established order and some movements occur which foreshadow another form of society. We can take their side and try to act in conjunction with them. But, the idea that there can be a radical transformation of society, a transcendence of social alienation, is a philosophical absurdity. Although I did not follow the evolution of *Informations et Liaisons Ouvrières—Informations et Correspondance Ouvrières* closely, I believe the break between Lefort and Simon grew out of that conception.

Between 1958 and 1961 the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* group grew very satisfactorily. Two or three cells operated in Paris and several were created around the country with some students and workers. By 1960 there were about one hundred of us, which was something for that period. Public meetings were followed and the group had more than a negligible influence on some students in Paris as well as on the workers at Renault thanks to the efforts pursued by Mothé. This development was connected with the demonstrations against the Algerian War and the ignominious attitudes expressed by the traditional organizations.

There were no differences within the group regarding an interpretation of Gaullism. No one ever viewed it as fascism. Gaullism was seen immediately as the passage to modern capitalism through the liquidation of a whole set of "backward" characteristics of the preceding regime. This had specific implications for the history of the bourgeoisie and French society: this included the colonial empire, of course, the economic and financial chaos, and even the political chaos of the bourgeois republic.

I wrote an essay during this period which gave this interpretation but also insisted that the French bourgeois were incapable, with or without DeGaulle, of providing themselves with a "normal" and "stable" political operation. On the other hand, DeGaulle's taking power came about by default on the part of the population. Perhaps more than that, since in November, 1958, DeGaulle and his constitution were voted in by plebiscite. One cannot glide over the significance of that fact.

This posed the problem of interpreting the political attitude of the population. This interpretation should have included the developments in all capitalist countries because people everywhere showed this same attitude. This, along with other themes, particularly our critique of traditional conceptions of socialism, led to the demand for a radical revision. I attempted to tie these different themes together in an essay

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called "Le mouvement révolutionaire sous le capitalisme moderne." The first version was circulated among the group in 1959. This immediately caused a split because it served to induce a crystallization, through opposition, of everyone in the group who rejected a radical critique. There had already been some texts (like "Sur la dynamique du capitalisme," 1953-54) which implied the rejection of the classical positions on emiseration, crises, the growth of the industrial reserve army, in short, everything which passes for, and is actually, Marx's economic theory and the classical conception of imperialism. Also, there were some essays ("Sur le contenu du socialisme," 1955-58) which rejected another central idea of Marxism, according to which, the revolution would be able to simply receive capitalist technology and put it in the service of socialism. And finally, a rejection of the traditional conception of the role and contents of theory, which was part of the speculative attitude put forth in the West for twenty-five centuries. All that converged in its consequences and finally there was, as comrade Mao would say, a transformation of quantity into quality. This was not merely some particular position that was placed in question, but Marxism, in its totality. Naturally, this immediately provoked a horrified reaction by Maille, Lyotard, Souyri, and such responses as "Castoriadis has abandoned Marxism! Castoriadis has become an existentialist!"

The uproar lasted for three years. For a long time those who characteristically referred to themselves as "against this tendency" only opposed us with polemical arguments which contradicted each other ("there has been no growth in the workers' standard of living"—"there has been some but it's not significant or not as significant as you say," etc.). They produced some texts during the last three months before the split where they tried to defend an incoherent variation of paleo-neo-Marxism. Actually, I regret that the authors did not publish them.

Obviously, this dispute quickly interfered with the group and seriously hindered all its activities. At the same time, a polarization developed relative to the projects. Those "against the tendency" had gradually taken charge of *Pouvoir ouvrier*, and the others, who agreed with the position in "Le mouvement révolutionaire sous le capitalisme moderne" were more involved with the journal. The former tried to turn *Pouvoir ouvrier* into a kind of publication for agitation on the traditional themes we had denounced, saying this showed Trotskyism to be correct. They criticized the unions for not going far enough and made just about anything an occasion for a strike. They were unable to refrain from writing an editorial every time the government said or did something—which in our eyes was an error since that amounted to placing oneself on the same ground with the enemy. They opposed our propositions aimed at radically transforming the focus of our propaganda and work with jests, platitudes and more permanent obstructions. We wanted to work on the basis of the problems of the young and students (all of that was recorded in some essays in 1960, several years before Berkeley); or on women and the family, on pedagogy and a critique of the pretense of education (even a critique of the existence of education); or on struggles other than those of the industrial proletariat and strike demands. The theoretical and practical relation between the two groups became more and more hollow. The split occurred in July, 1963. Amicably, they retained *Pouvoir ouvrièr* and we kept *Socialisme ou Barbarie*.

After the split, we published six issues of the journal (35 to 40), the last one dated June 1965. The group operated until the spring of 1966. During this last period the

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outside audience was perhaps the largest ever (about 1,000 copies were sold of each issue; the public meetings drew upwards of 200 people). But, on the other side, there was no feedback, nothing returned. Our readers rarely wrote and people came and left the meetings by themselves (in spite of our attempts to break the professorial structure of traditional meetings). No doubt, the ideas circulated but the public acted like passive consumers. Moreover, the problem of recruitment became more and more important. Some young friends came—very intelligent and lively, but at the same time unable to function collectively with the old-timers (or the reverse, which amounts to the same thing). My interpretation is that, initially, they evidently came (as everyone does) because of personal reasons which were continually conveyed to the group through their behavior. And, given the situation, the group did not provide the ground whereby these reasons or motivations could have been transformed into something else. In a sense, the group became a substitute for the family with all the problems that entails. In turn, that brought out reactions from the old-timers. The operations of the group, undermined by the resulting frictions, became less and less coherent, less and less collective.

Finally, the same spirit that plagued the journal posed a serious problem. My latest essays questioned the whole of Marxist thought, trying to return to the conceptual foundations of society and history. Because of this my writing took a more "abstract" and "philosophical" turn. This work remained solitary, not just because I was writing it alone, but because the group did not feel the necessity to discuss it. Other essays appeared in the journal (for example, by Mothé and Chatel) but there was a lack of unity. The journal had become the main activity of the group but, at the same time, it was no longer a collective effort. To maintain the journal and the group under these conditions no longer made much sense. So I proposed to suspend the journal (cf. the introduction to the *Société bureaucratique*, 1st ed., 10:18, 751). During this time a friend said to me, "If it dies..."[1] In effect, that happened later.

Why did we not try to re-establish the group later on? Well, in this case there is an enormous difficulty maintaining a revolutionary activity when you are no longer able to lean on a theoretical *corpus* by saying, "Never mind, the answer is in Marx or Mao," and instead, you try to face the real problems honestly.

The experience of all groups after May 1968 showed that it is impossible to avoid certain questions. For example, who are we? How shall we function? Who is part of the "we" and who is not? Is there a "we"? And, what is the "we"? The last question is very important—this "we" can be mystifying and alienating. Moreover, most of the time people in organizations do not say "we" but "the party," "the group," etc. Whatever the case may be, this "party," this "group"—or this "we"—is defined, at least ideally, by implicit or explicit reference to a defined, completed theory. However, I think this conception of theory is a mystifying fantasy. People must gather together because they share a project—a revolutionary project. One can say, then, that the difficulty is only misplaced. But I would say more, that it is made considerably worse. The reason is that a project carries a dimension of perpetual elaboration which is never completed. It is open, implying a subjective *attitude* which is entirely different in regard to theorizing. In sum, I categorically reject the

1. Translators' note: *"Si le grain ne muert..."* is the title of an autobiographical work by André Gide and it is taken from the *Bible*, John XII, 24: "...but if it dies, it bringeth forth much fruit."

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possibility of a complete theory, or theoretical sovereignty. Nor will I accept *just anything* for the sake of talking about it. (Something that is practiced almost universally today by people who believe they have broken through traditional frameworks only to become a different kind of prisoner. The "dominant discourse" in a certain area today, that horrible red herring Freudian-Nietzschean-Marxism, is strictly a *just anything*.) Although such an attitude is difficult to hold, I do not think it impossible. But, unless a sufficient number of people who agree can get together, I do not see how we can establish something which has the possibility to live and develop.

The break with Marxism

Question: In your eyes, what was it that made the break with Marxism necessary? And how was it tied in with the analysis you made regarding the situation of the workers' movement?

Castoriadis: We can discuss this on two levels: the theoretical tenor of Marxism and the manner in which it poses the problem of theory, and the historical fate of Marxism.

On the theoretical level, there is a Marxist metaphysics, a theory of history and an economic theory. All three are intimately connected and yet, all three are untenable. Since the Marxists consider the economic theory as the cornerstone of the whole framework, let's begin there.

What is theory for Marx? What is it able to say? How far can it go? What are its limits? We know that, contrary to the spirit of certain passages in the early writings, he systematically developed a framework aimed at constituting a total theory. Supposedly, it had no limits and defined the laws of capitalist economy, showing how they would function and inevitably bring about its own destruction and a new society. But such a theory is impossible in principle.

In short, everything said in *Capital* is possible only by means of eliminating two decisive factors in the operation and evolution of capitalism: technological development and class struggle. This is not by chance. It is an inherent necessity in this kind of theorizing because these two factors manifest the creativity of history in the economic domain. Hence, to include them would mean to establish "laws" of economic evolution that are only partial and transitory.

The elimination of the class struggle is all too obvious. Marx claims that labor power is a commodity and treats it as such in theory (starting with the idea that it *is* such in the reality of capitalism). Now we know that in the Marxist system a commodity has a definite exchange-value and, if it is a "means of production," it also has a definite use-value. But labor-power has neither a definite use-value nor a definite exchange-value. Let's consider use-value: the capitalist who buys a ton of coal knows, in relation to the given state of technology, how many units of heat he can obtain from it. But, when he buys an hour of labor he does not know how much output he can get from that. Marx continually worked on the basis of the postulate that, just as the capitalist will get the maximum units of heat from the coal which current technology allows (obviously the coal is a passive object), so too will he be able to get the maximum output from the worker in relation to what current technology allows (the type and speed of the machines, etc.)—because the worker is also passive. But this is false. Marx hardly ever discusses the intense struggle over

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output which occurs daily within industry. He refers to the workers' resistance to output only incidentally in two places in the first volume of *Capital.* And, in these two instances, he presents it as destined to fail, which means the worker is a purely passive object of capital in production and that there is no class *struggle* within production. There is only an integral and uncontested domination of one class by another.

But the history of modern industry is not only the history of great union battles. It is also and especially the history of what occurs in production and in relations to production eight hours a day, sixty minutes an hour, sixty seconds a minute. During each second, every gesture by a worker has two faces: one which conforms to the imposed norms of production and the other which combats them. The net output is the result of the struggle developing on this ground. Thus, labor-power does not have a definite use-value which can be grasped independently of this kind of struggle and its effects.

At the same time, it is easy to see that this struggle co-determines exchange-value to a decisive degree. This happens not only because it co-determines the productivity of labor (and through that the unitary value of the commodities for worker consumption) but also because it alone fixes the effective wage level. Wages are not "x dollars an hour"—that is meaningless. In fact, the capitalist does not buy an hour. He acts as if he's buying "an hour," but in reality he buys actual output which is in fact indeterminate. Hence, he tries to make it determinate by introducing new machines, schedules, etc., while the workers resist this by slowing the schedule, cheating on the side, organizing among themselves, etc. In reality, wages are a rate of exchange between dollars for the output realized during an hour and a second term which is indeterminate. Dollars for workers who completely submit to the schedule is not the same thing as dollars for those who successfully resist it.

How does Marx account for the determination of labor-power's exchange-value? Since the former *is* a commodity, it is worth, like all other commodities, the "labor" it contains. That is to say, the labor incorporated in the "costs of production and reproduction of labor power" materially represented by the quantity of commodities a worker (or his family) consumes in order to live and reproduce a new generation of workers. If we call this quantity the working class's "standard of living," exchange-value of labor-power will simply be a function of two factors and two alone: the "standard of living" and the unitary value of each commodity which composes it (in fact, the simple multiplicative product, the one balanced by the other). Now, this unitary value of each commodity is only the reverse, roughly, of labor productivity. The more the latter increases, the less labor time is incorporated in each commodity produced and the less the unitary value of the latter. Thus, *if* the working class's standard of living remains constant, the increase in labor productivity, constantly pursued and realized by capitalism, *ipso facto* signifies a reduction in value of the commodities which make up the workers' standard of living. *Thus,* a reduction in the "paid part" of the working day and an increase in the exploitation rate, while supposing the working day itself remains constant.

But can we assume that the workers' standard of living has remained constant? Marx has little to say on that. He asserts that it is always "determined by historical and moral factors" and continues to assume that we must take it as a constant. But, logically, this is arbitrary and, in reality, false. For the sake of an example and as a

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first approximation, we can hypothesize that the workers' standard of living remains constant if we consider the economic situation for a short period of time. However, we absolutely cannot do that for one or two centuries—and yet this is the thrust of Marx's theory. Obviously, there has been considerable change (an increase) in the workers' real standard of living over the past 150 years. As I said before, this increase has resulted from the informal, implicit struggles at the production level, as well as the larger struggles of overt demand. But Marx made this struggle an abstraction, and everything that follows in *Capital* necessarily depends on this "analysis" of the determination of the exchange-value of labor-power as a commodity. The whole structure is built on sand: the whole theory is determined by this "oversight" regarding the class struggle. We need only re-read the end of *Wages, Price and Profit* to see that even when he admits the workers' struggle has an influence on wage levels, it is conjunctural and "cyclic." It is never able to alter the fundamental distribution of wealth in the long run because of the regulation of the law of value.

And there is more. At a certain point, capitalists realized that a regular increase in the workers' standard of living was an inherent necessity in the operation of the system. Without a continued growth in the market for consumer goods, there would be no capitalist expansion, at least not as we know it. Obviously, in certain situations (Nazi Germany, the USSR for a long time, periods of war, etc.) the system orients production towards the manufacture of arms or accelerated accumulation. Here, the workers' real standard of living levels off or even declines. But the system's "normal" evolution over the long run requires the continued expansion of the consumer goods market. And, to a large extent, the market is constituted by solvent demand—the workers' income and wages in general. So, if we wanted to make a hypothesis today, as an example and initial approximation, we would be required to assert the stability of the workers' real income *growth trend* in the short term, during the period of study.

Indeed, we can imagine a hypothesis on paper which would attempt to quantify the intensity of the class struggle and its relation to wage levels, and insert it in a "more general" schema. (There have been such attempts by academic economists using the rate of unionization as the variable representing "wage pressure.") I don't even want to discuss that—I consider such an orientation fundamentally absurd.

All this shows that the idea of a "law of the growth of exploitation rates" is a myth. Moreover, the idea that there is a "law" which determines the evolution of the distribution of social wealth between capitalist and workers, while making the class struggle an abstraction, is a complete myth.

By the same token, the so-called "law" of organic capital growth rests on a fallacy. In terms of *volume*, and more specifically in *physical* terms, people claim that the mass of constant capital increases (the *quantity* of machines, primary materials, etc.) in relation to variable capital (that is to say, the number of workers or working hours). From this we can conclude that constant capital, in terms of value, increases in relation to variable capital, also in terms of value. This is what people call a logical *non sequitur*. The evolution of the physical mass of constant capital says nothing about the evolution of the mass of its *value* because the latter is equal to the physical mass multipled by the unitary value. Moreover, this last variable *diminishes* with the increase of labor productivity (about which there is no reason to suppose that it increases less quickly in the sector producing the means of production than in

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the economy as a whole). This happens not because the quantity of machines, primary materials, etc., increases relative to the number of workers, but because the value of constant capital increases relative to that of variable capital. At the same time, Marx believed that the value of variable capital diminished over time (with the number of workers constant) in relation to the increase in the exploitation rate. But we have seen that the latter does not exist. Nothing can be said *a priori* about the evolution of the organic composition.

The "tendential decline of the profit rate" is an example of the same problem. Perhaps someday someone should write a psychoanalytic essay about the motives for the fascination with the time-honored idea of the decline of the profit rates by Marx, the Marxists and the political economists before them. Marx's formula for the rate of profit is sv/c +v (the relation of total surplus value to the sum of constant capital and variable capital). "sv" is a function of the number of workers employed since surplus-value is drawn only from actual labor. The "law of the increase of capital's organic composition" says that c increases at a higher rate than v. Since sv depends only on v and the latter increases at a slower rate than c, the numerator of the fraction should decrease, over time, relative to the denominator. Here, all the links in the reasoning are false. We have already seen that it is not necessarily true that organic composition increases (in reality it is not true). On the other hand, Marx asserts that the exploitation rate (the relation sv/v—the rate of surplus value) increases over time. Now how do we know that this increase does not sufficiently compensate for an eventual increase in the organic composition? Or even that it does not overcompensate? In this case, there would be a tendency towards a rise in the profit rate rather than a decline. Finally, the formula is "problematic" in this sense: sv/c + v is not the profit rate on capital but the profit rate on turnover (capital is represented only by c which is the portion productively consumed during a period; generally a small part of the capital engaged in production).

On the other hand, is all this of interest or consequence? Let's admit that the rate of profit tends to diminish—and after? If the question is the rate of profit *on capital*, we could conclude (all things being equal—by no means a trivial postulate) that the trend of capitalist accumulation would tend to slow down. And then? (Note that in reality we have observed the opposite up till now.) For two centuries capitalist production has increased, let us say, about 4% on the average. Would it cheer us up or affect our political perspectives to think that in 2175 the annual rate of increase will be only 2%? However, it is not even a question of the rate of profit on capital but the rate of profit on turnover which, as such, has no direct relation to accumulation trends.

Finally, if we supposed that such a "tendential decline" does exist, why would it cease to exist in a socialist society? According to Marx, the reasons for the tendential decline of the profit rate in capitalist society are technical—which have nothing to do with the social structure of capitalism. So, it all comes down to this: there can always be more machines, primary materials, etc., for a given number of workers. Since we do not claim that in a socialist society people would try to reverse technical development (in any case Marx and the Marxists would never say that), this factor will always be there. In fact, it will even be aggravated since the counter-balancing factor in capitalist society, the increase in the exploitation rate, will no longer exist in socialist society. In that case, will socialist society have a reduction in the rate of

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surplus-production (since we can no longer speak of a profit)? And what would be the consequences of that?

Now we come to what I have called the elimination of the technological factor in Marx. Certainly, Marx saw very well the constantly repeated disruption which technical evolution introduced into the capitalist society and economy; he gave exemplary and incomparable socio-historical analyses of it. But when he has to construct his economic system, it is as though he had forgotten all of that. The implicit postulate, without which everything said in *Capital* would be meaningless, is that there is technical progress (without which there would be no rise in the productivity of labor), but that this technical progress is represented by a continuous variable. There is a growing and continuous function of time, which determines the output per hour of labor. That's all! If one wants to go farther, to take into account everything Marx saw when he spoke historically and concretely about technical progress, there is no longer something which could be called the value of capital and treated in economic theory as Marx treats it: something *measureable* corresponding to the accumulation of buildings, machines, mines, etc.

Marx's conception presupposes, in fact, that the value of capital can be measured, that this heterogeneous *assemblage* of objects can be represented by a *number*, that the hare and the hounds can be added together: this is the function of the labor theory of value. For example, each machine has value insofar as it incorporates past labor, which can be counted (in hours, etc.). If there is no technical progress at all, which means that the same type of machine is indefinitely produced and reproduced by the same methods, then there is no problem: the labor (direct and indirect) actually expended in the manufacture of the machine, its "historical" cost, unambiguously measures the latter's value. If there is no technical progress, then *ipso facto* the manufacturing methods change; machines produced in former times and still functioning today have a different (generally greater) "historical" cost than do machines produced today by more efficient methods. However, it would be bizarre to say that they nonetheless have "more value" (an abstraction developed from usury, etc.). Logic (and the real practice of the capitalist economy) leads to saying that the value of this type of machine (like, moreover, that of any product) will have to be determined not by its actual "historical" cost but by its necessary present cost (in other words, by its cost of reproducibility).

If technical progress is continuous in the mathematical sense—if it is made by infinitesimal increments—then by adding other fairly restrictive conditions it can be shown that it is possible to preserve a calculus of the machine's "value" according to its costs of production.

But that possibility no longer exists if technical progress is made by leaps and bounds, as it is in reality. Nor will there be an infinitesimal "obsolescence" (technical aging) of each machine which makes its value tend insensibly toward zero. Instead, at the same time there will be very new machines; others which, though outmoded, continue to operate but are no longer reproduced (and consequently their cost of reproducibility can no longer be meaningfully calculated); and finally others which suddenly shift from being into non-being because, although the old ones are still very good, they suffer the effects of the invention of another machine which renders them positively and totally unprofitable, or even because the final product they produce is suddenly replaced by another—by a completely different manufacture. In these

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conditions, a measure of capital which has a meaning through time can no longer be established; it can no longer be said what c represents, if not in an absolutely "instantaneous" sense, in the formulas and supposed laws of development of capitalism.

Question: Doesn't this call all economic discourse into question?

Castoriadis: Of course.

Question: Then only a descriptive task remains for economics as a science?

Castoriadis: There is certainly more than that. Even in sociology one can do much more than description. In economics there are connections, repetitions, "local" and partial regularities, general tendencies: the phenomena have an intelligibility, provided, of course, that one never forgets that in order to understand anything in economics, it must be reimmersed in the socio-historical. But what does not exist is a political economy established on the model of a physico-mathematical science. This is the model Marx has in mind when he writes *Capital*; but such a model presupposes invariants and conservations. The "laws" of physics are invariant relations, in which constant parameters appear (the "universal constants"); there is a relation which is always the same linking the pressure, temperature, and volume of a gas; and there is a constant of perfect gases. And there is always "something" which *is conserved* through all the modifications of a physical system: mass-energy, electrical charge, etc. But what is "conserved" in economics? Where can invariant functional relations be found in it? Every time the attempt is made to establish such relations (for decades academic economics has exercised itself in vain in this attempt), it turns out that sooner or later their form changes, their parameters change, and the very type of their dependence in relation to the "initial conditions" or "externals" under which they are supposed to be valid, changes. Again: economics is full of "locally regular" linkages which are not unintelligible; but economics cannot be a matter of integrating them into an exhaustive, permanent system of invariant relations, and still less a matter of formalizing them.

Question: You are showing how Marxist economic theory is untenable. How is Marx's theory of history untenable?

Castoriadis: What has alerady been said about economics shows that capitalist society cannot be regarded as obeying the theoretical schema of historical materialism (as it is formulated, for example, in the preface to the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*). Still less can the history of humanity before the bourgeois era be understood on the basis of that schema. For example, how can the societies called archaic be understood that way? On the "base" of the same state of productive forces and the same type of relations of production, these societies often exhibit an incredible variety of forms of social organization and life. In the face of this, one Marxist response consists of saying: you're kidding yourself about that variety, which is only apparent; the forms of organization and life are only a sauce, in every case the substance is the same: though some are totemists and others are not, though some live in a matriarchal system and others in a patriarchal system, the essential is that they all live by crop-gathering or hunting.

But that amounts to eliminating history and society, to deciding in advance that the only reality is that of the "productive forces" and that everything else is a mere epiphenomenon (whose mere existence and variations, moreover, thus become totally unintelligible: why the devil aren't these savages satisfied with hunting—why do they

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turn to representing things? And why do they represent *different* things, since they do nothing but hunt?). This also amounts to judging the entirety of human history on the basis of the crudest and most brutal mentality a capitalist employer could ever have had: Who is so-and-so?—He earns so much a month. What is this tribe?—They are hunters at such-and-such a level of technical development. Thus, the whole history of humanity is seen as a series of less and less imperfect attempts to succeed to that final perfection, the capitalist factory. And insofar as they have not yet succeeded, these poor savages waste their time inventing "absurdities" (Engels writes this unmistakably). Finally, all this amounts to the "rationalist-materialist" philosophy of Marxism, which is only a variant of a metaphysics twenty-five centuries old and nearly void of meaning.

But we must also talk about the historical destiny of Marxism. It is strange to see people who proclaim themselves Marxists, or who want to "defend Marx," obstinately ignore this question. Could I discuss Christianity by saying, "The Inquisition?—I don't know anything about it; the Pope is an accident; the Catholic Church's participation in the Spanish Civil War on Franco's side?—those were empirical priests. All of that is secondary in relation to the essence of Christianity, which is manifest in such-and-such phrases of the Gospels"? Christianity has been an instituted social and historical reality for two thousand years; certainly it is infinitely complex and ambiguous, but that reality nevertheless has a meaning which I cannot ignore for a moment: Christianity has been and still is the religion of power which teaches people that they must render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, etc.

I cannot do otherwise regarding Marxism. Certainly, for Marxism it has been not 2,000 years but only 120; but historically the last 60 of those years have been very weighty. The *reality* of Marxism is primarily—to an overwhelming extent which surpasses all the rest—that it is the ideology referred to by totalitarian regimes of exploitation and oppression which exercise their power over a billion men and women. And the reality is also that Marxism is the ideology of bureaucratic parties in other countries which aim to install regimes identical to the former ones, and whose everyday practice is a series of infamies. This has not lasted 2,000 years, but it weighs two billion tons.

If one says, "Obviously, Brezhnev is not a Marxist but a mystifier who uses Marx; the genuine thought of Marx has nothing to do with all that," then it is no longer a question of Marxism, but of the "genuine thought" of Marx. But the "genuine thought" of Marx—a mysterious expression—has the same status as the genuine thought of Freud, the genuine thought of Hegel, the genuine thought of Kant, etc. It is a great work; it is ambiguous; it is also contradictory; there are different strata; work, an immense work, is required to begin to regain it—that is, to find in it, above all, questions. But the faithful always believe that there is a complete, straightforward truth, and that it is materially deposited in Marx's writings. Of course, Marx is very important. We would not be able to hold this conversation for a second if we had not gone through his thought and did not live in a world which has been influenced by it.

Question: Is the proletariat always, as Marx said, the bearer of the revolutionary project?

Castoriadis: What we call the revolutionary project arose in and through workers' struggles—and before Marx (between 1790 and 1840 in England and France). All

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the relevant ideas were formed and formulated during that period: the fact of exploitation and its conditions, the project of a radical transformation of society, that of a government by the producers and for the producers, the suppression of wage-labor...

The history of the proletariat is a fundamental fact and an inexhaustible source. We know of no other exploited class which has thus constituted itself as an active pole of society, which has engendered a project of such a radical transformation, which has acted with such audacity and heroism, and which, as an exploited class, has accomplished that extraordinary thing: to have codetermined the evolution of the social system to a decisive degree. Everything that has happened in the Western world during the past 150 years is, to an enormous extent, the result of workers' struggles. They have imposed raises in wages, reductions in work time, accession to political rights, and the "true" bourgeois republic; again, they have induced a certain type of technological evolution.

But at present it must be said that in modern capitalist societies the proletariat is constantly diminishing as a percentage of the population: at present it is becoming a minority in the most "developed" capitalist countries. In the United States, manual workers represent hardly a quarter of the working population; and the tendency is the same in the other modern capitalist countries. Above all, for more than 25 years the proletariat has not appeared, as it did in the past, to be a class aiming at the radical transformation of society.

Thus we can no longer maintain the proletariat in the role which Marx assigned it on the basis of the idea that the process of capitalist accumulation would transform everyone into industrial proletarians (aside from a handful of capitalist and perhaps some supervisors). This is not what is happening. To say that everyone or almost everyone has become a wage-earner does not mean that everyone has become a proletarian, with the content that term is given. Being a wage-earner is the practically general condition in modern capitalist society; it is no longer a situation of "class." Very clearly, there are very important differentiations of many viewpoints among the "wage-earners." But they do not provide the criteria of a division into classes. For example, the strict "economic" criterion, the level of income (wage), cannot really be used. Used consistently and on a world scale, it would require us to say that the least-paid wage-earner in a developed capitalist country is still an exploiter of the two-thirds of humanity living in the undeveloped countries. The other line of demarcation within the wage-earners, that between directors and executors, tends to become less and less relevant because the categories of pure directors and pure executives are numerically less and less important. The bureaucratic pyramid is swelling, one can say, in the middle, because there is a proliferation of productive tasks whose agents cannot be said to be reduced to the role of mere executives.

The only criterion of differentiation within the mass of wage-earners which is still relevant for us is their attitude toward the established system. This amounts to saying that it is necessary to abandon "objective criteria," whatever they may be. With the exception of a small minority at the top, the entire population is equally open—or closed—to a revolutionary perspective. Conjuncturally, it could be that a certain stratum or category plays a more important role; but one can no longer maintain the idea that the proletariat is "the" repository of the revolutionary project. That

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idea has become a sort of incantation which allows the Communist Party, on the one hand, to pose as the party which speaks "in the name" of the workers, and allows left and far-left groupuscles, on the other hand, to mystify themselves, repeating "we are ten, but we are the potential party of the proletariat," or "we *are* by right that proletariat which still does not know itself." It is also clear that one cannot both call oneself a Marxist and try to find a substitute for the proletariat in the person of Third World peasants.

The political privilege of the proletariat in Marxism was homologous to the theoretical and philosophical privilege accorded the sphere of production. We have seen that the latter cannot be maintained. Symmetrically, one cannot neglect the historical importance of the evolution of the struggles of youth, or of everything that is happening in the female part of the population (after all, reproduction of the species is a condition of production). That takes us from the shakeup of relations between the sexes and of traditional family structure to the crisis of all authoritarian structures. These manifestations must have as much importance for us as any others.

A last point about the relation between this idea of the proletariat and Marxist theory. A very frequent argument often encountered today is this: the proletariat has a privileged historical role, as Marx's work demonstrates (which is true); "Marx's work has a special status (of truth), because it is the conscious expression of the movement of the proletariat (which is the historically privileged class)." It is not said in this form, but ten minutes of Socratic questioning suffice to lead almost all Marxists into these statements. So also: the proof of the truth of the Scriptures is revelation, and the proof that there has been revelation is that the Scriptures say so. This is a self-confirming system. In fact, it is true that Marx's work, according to his spirit and even his intention, stands or falls within this assertion: the proletariat is, and is manifest as, the revolutionary class which is on the point of changing the world. If such is not the case—as it is not—then Marx's work again becomes what it really always was, an attempt (difficult, obscure, and profoundly ambiguous) to think society and history in the perspective of their revolutionary transformation—and we have to take it all up again on the basis of our own situation, which certainly includes as components both Marx himself and the history of the proletariat.

The Revolutionary Project Today

Question: What you said a little earlier about youth, women, etc., was like an initial development of the formula "the revolutionary problematic today must be extended to the ensemble of the spheres of social activity, and in the first place to everyday life."

Castoriadis: Certainly. The everyday is also the everyday life of the worker, for example. It is then eight or more hours of work a day at the factory, with well-known working conditions; the implicit, informal, incessant struggle in production: the struggle against the timeclocks contains the germ of the workers' tendency to determine their own work pace, which has a major significance. But the everyday is also the house, the evening, the neighborhood, people's whole life in all its unknown, neglected aspects, which are considered secondary by those solely obsessed with strikes, "political" events, or "international" crises.

Question: Then do we end up with Marcuse's problematic in relation to the struggle of youth?

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Castoriadis: It is hard to encompass Marcuse's thought in that respect. Sometimes he sounds as though he thought that it can no longer be a question of a revolution, but instead of revolutionary struggles condemned to remain minoritarian; as if he were saying: "Long live the students; long live the prisoners who revolt; but we know that the world cannot change essentially. So much the better if people fight somewhere: that proves the human being does not let himself be completely enslaved and brutalized." For my part, I categorically reject that attitude and the philosophy corresponding to it.

Sometimes one gets the impression that he denies the revolutionary role of the proletariat—more precisely, that he denies any possibility of a revolutionary attitude among workers, and reserves these possibilities to other categories (youth, etc.). This is Marx inside out: there is a negative privilege of the proletariat, and always a positive privilege of someone determined. As for me, I say that this is the universe of thought which we must escape from.

Question: What can be said about revolutionary activity today?

Castoriadis: First, we must break with the imperialist conception that revolutionary activity is the act of revolutionary militants alone. One can only talk about *a* revolutionary activity, about *a type* of revolutionary activity. In contemporary society there is necessarily a plurality of potentially and actually revolutionary activities. The activity of militants who organize in a revolutionary organization is only one vector of a multiform combat which is unfolding in many spheres, potentially in all (if this was not the case, the activity of revolutionaries would be intrinsically absurd). As such, the activity of revolutionary militants has no privilege; it is one component of a historical movement which surpasses it—which must surpass it—infinitely.

Question: But can we still talk about *a* revolutionary project?

Castoriadis: That's something else, and maybe we have to specify what we understand here by a project. We are not talking about a "program," an ensemble of concrete measures which the masses in power, in France or Venezuela, would do well to take. The revolutionary project is the historical goal of a society which would overcome alienation; by alienation I understand a socio-historical fact (institutionalized heteronomy), not a metaphysical given. In other words, the revolutionary project is the goal of an autonomous society, which is not *enslaved* to its past or to its own creations. I do say enslaved. Certainly, one is always "determined" by one's past and by one's own acts; but everything depends on what is understood by "determined" and how far that determination goes. This determination is not the same for a psychotic and for a "normal" or a neurotic; nor is it the same among "traditional" (archaic or Asiatic) societies, the Greek cities, or the United States of France at the end of the eighteenth century.

What is an autonomous society? At first, I gave the concept of autonomy, extended to society, the meaning of "collective management [*gestion*]." I am now led to give it a more radical content which is no longer merely collective management ("self-management [*autogestion*]") but instead *the permanent and explicit self-institution of society:* a state where the collectivity knows that its institutions are its own creation and has become capable of regarding them as such, of retaking them and transforming them. If this idea is accepted, it defines a unity of the revolutionary project.

Question: It seems that you have defined global reflection as both indispensable and

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impossible. One might also wonder if your analysis does not assign struggles a regulatory effect. It seems that the self-institution you are talking about is a global project, a sort of declaration of principle according to which this globality is viable; and that the struggles will result in a new kind of rationality.

Castoriadis: I do not say that everyday struggles as such issue into globality. However, when we analyze a given struggle—workers against timeclocks, students over programs—we find that at a specific moment and on a specific point it contests *the* capitalist system which, whatever its contradictions and faults, itself has an overall "globality" translated here as oppressive education, there as clocking, etc.

When someone refuses to remain a passive object of the educational system, of the factory management, or of her husband after having been her father's, there is a "positive reversal [*envers*]" of this refusal, whether he knows it or not: *another* principle in frontal contradiction with the fundamental principle of capitalism. My interpretation of these struggles leads me to see a unity or at least a homology in them, in their meaning. If I am mistaken, then in fact we can no longer talk about a revolutionary project in the present period; it would be necessary to go back to positions like those just now imputed to Marcuse. But if I am not mistaken then, by the very fact that their homology asserts itself through different sectors and activities of society, these homologous meanings necessarily bring us back to the question of social globality and its reality.

Clearly, talking about the globality of society is talking about a problem which exists only insofar as the ensemble of society is an active society. And that is what creates this impression of an enormous hiatus. I believe that the imaginative, creative capacity of society will permit it to resolve problems which may appear insoluble to us today, and others whose formulation we cannot even surmise. If such a capacity does exist, it will actually serve no purpose to preoccupy ourselves with this or that aspect of the organization of a socialist society in its first phase and to talk about it. Such discourse is meaningful only if it aims to clarify as much as possible the greatest possible number of questions, to clear the terrain; to show that certain difficulties are imaginary, that for certain others certain types of solutions are conceivable here and now, etc. But all this always presupposes that one is referring to *the determining activity of people* as capable of facing the questions which arise—and as alone capable of facing them.

Take an example. For a very long time I have perceived school not as an institution which has to be reformed and perfected, but as a prison which has to be destroyed. As the "positive reversal" of this negation, one can conceive of the reabsorption of the function of educating the young generations by life in society. (I am completely hostile to the mythology of the "noble savage" which reappeared some time ago. This does not prevent me from stating that, from this viewpoint, archaic societies make us see the realized possibility of an "education," that is, an absorption of culture by the individual as he grows up, which does not imply the institution of a sector of activity separated and specialized to that end.) But it is not a question of proposing a new utopia, since that utopia will always be empty in its central point: the reabsorption of the educative function by social life will be meaningful only if people as a whole are able to raise their children, and others'—thus, *children*—otherwise than they do now. That implies profound transformations in the organization and nature of work itself as well as in the dwelling, in people's psyches, etc.

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That is, this returns immediately to the globality of society—and to the activity and very being of the collectivity as capable of taking charge of it.

Will society be able to secrete a coherent response to these questions? We cannot demonstrate in advance by theoretical reflection that it will, still less that this response would have the meaning we try to outline in advance. Such a "demonstration" would clearly be a contradiction in terms.

But what we know is that *all societies in history have been able to give coherent responses to the problem of their globality as such and to the particularities of that globality, which were always specific.* Let me say in passing that this coherence leaves, or rather, must leave, all the sociologists, psychoanalysts, economists, and so forth bewildered and speechless (I say must, since in fact they rarely occupy themselves with it), because it infinitely surpasses any conventional analytic capacity. The psyche of individuals, the economic order, social organization, the mode of manufacturing objects, the spirit of the language, etc.—all this *holds together*; one cannot exist without the other and society cannot exist without any one of them. It is society which poses it thus: it is society which institutes itself as global society.

Immense enigma and blinding fact: there is no failed society, there has never been one. There are biological monsters; there are psychic failures; there are no failed societies. The Chinese, the Athenians, the French: without knowing it, the innumerable collectivities in history have always been able to institute a coherent social life. To say that post-revolutionary society would be the only one not to be coherent can only rest on the idea that there is a radical absurdity or impossibility in the goal of an autonomous society. But until that idea has been "demonstrated" (and I say that such a "demonstration" is impossible in principle), I will continue to claim that it only expresses a practical-political-philosophical decision of whomever voices it.

Question: What is it possible to do at present? And what are the tasks of revolutionaries more particularly as intellectuals?

Castoriadis: The first task is to try to organize as revolutionary militants. As long as a revolutionary remains isolated, the question remains without much mystery or much interest. Isolated individuals must try to do what they can where they are, but no general answer is possible.

The important question is: how to overcome the problems which arise for a collectivity of revolutionaries and oppose its survival and development? For the rest, we can do nothing: workers will struggle or won't; the women's movement will expand or won't; students will continue or will return to the fold. But what we must feel responsible for is that *in France there are at least hundreds of people who think nearly along the lines sketched by the framework of our discussion, by the problematic which matters to us* (it matters little if their answers vary)—a framework and problematic which others reject. However, every one of them feels or knows that the calamities which ravage small revolutionary organizations have not disappeared; they are no closer today than they were yesterday to believing that they could provide an answer to the problems which would resurge if an organization was again constituted.

The only way to find out if you can swim is to go into the water. Obviously, you can drown; but you can also choose to begin at a place where you have a footing. First, it is necessary to try to know whether an embryo of organization in the

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direction I allude to is possible at the time (if people exist who would participate in it), and then to try to define a certain number of points of agreement necessary and sufficient for beginning a collective activity. The principle that the organization constantly determines itself, with all that this implies, can begin to be put into practice on the basis of a common frame of reference of problems and ideas. People must be disposed to assume a permanent collective activity which is long-term and which during that time has no very general character. People must also closely examine the relations which bind them together, and more generally, the internal problems of the organization, which are linked with those arising in relation to the outside. In other words, they must have understood and admitted that a group is composed of individuals in flesh and blood, and not of pure political consciousness.

We can give these problems beautiful solutions on paper which are no good in practice, because what determines people's actual behavior in the organization, much more than their "ideas," is their life, their personality, their preoccupations, their experience, the relationships they have formed with others in the organization, etc. This is particularly true when the field of activity, within which a revolutionary organization operates, does not present the "objective constraints" that condition other types of collective activity. For example, when it is a question of productive work, whether it is alienated or not, there is an "objective" constraint which tends to minimize the effects of the factors mentioned above. It is not the same for a collectivity which in a sense floats in the air, and must draw from itself the essentials of what it thinks, what it wants to do, and how it wants to and must do it.

Now, if your question means, "Let's assume this organization exists; what must its tasks be?" I will obviously answer that it is for the organization to define them, and that they depend largely on conjunctural factors. For my part, I consider that there are immense tasks to be fulfilled on the plane of elucidation of the revolutionary problematic, denunciation of falsehood and mystifications, and diffusion of correct and justifiable ideas and of relevant, meaningful, exact information. There is also the task of propagating a new attitude toward ideas and theory, since it is necessary both to smash the always essentially religious type of relation people presently maintain with ideas and theory, and to show that, in spite of this, one cannot say just anything.

It seems to me clearly just as essential that the organization participate in struggles where they unfold and become an instrument in them, provided that this participation is not fabricated or parachuted in. Establishing a new relationship between revolutionaries, in the sense we want to give that word, and the social milieu, begins with the conviction that the organization has to learn about people in the street as much as they have to learn about it. But this still means nothing if it is not concretized; and here again an enormous field for invention is open to the activity of revolutionaries.

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*The Intellectuals on the New Social Contract**

by Antonin J. Liehm

I.

If today, at a distance of almost twenty years, we look back at the period after Stalin's death and compare it to what Eastern Europe has experienced since the fall of Khrushchev, we would have to begin by stating that these were different phases of a fundamentally identical process. The difference between the two consists less in individuals, the personnel who rule this area in the name of the bureaucracy and the military-police apparatus, than in the whole conception of post-Stalinist "socialism."

Stalin's dictatorship kept the country obedient by terror, justified by a pseudo-revolutionary phraseology. Terror provided the labor force for the industrialization of the country, it guaranteed a total mobilization in war-time, and it laid the foundations for an extremely rapid reconstruction after the war. The methods, the instruments and the use of terror came primarily from the structures of old Russia, which survived the revolution and the civil war in order to become the skeleton of the new system and of its ideology. Khrushchev came to power at a time when the wounds of war had healed, when the Soviet military power could rely on a nuclear power and the territorial gains made after the war seemed permanently consolidated. It was decided then to end mass terror as a principal form of rule and to move on to new methods. Khrushchev was a communist of the first generation and, as such, profoundly believed in the power of ideology. He was convinced that industrialization, military victory, post-war reconstruction, as well as successful entry into the era of the atom and the rocket, would be the confirmation of its validity, not only in the eyes of the Soviets but for the whole world; also, he was convinced that political-bureaucratic control by the party apparatus would be sufficient for the Soviet State to pass without shock through the transition from the Stalinist era to the new times.

However, what Khrushchev took for a Marxism superficially deformed by the cult of personality was really only a specific conglomeration of Russian religiosity, slavophilism, police and military patriotism, absolutism, European socialism, Marxism, Leninism and fascism, welded together by its members' common hatred for nineteenth and twentieth century liberalism. The demystification of the personality and teaching of Stalin inflicted a mortal blow to this conglomeration; through this begins the inevitable and extremely rapid decomposition of Stalinist ideology. And since it is also necessary, in the ideological domain, for every gap to be immediately filled from another source, Khrushchev found himself in an inextricable contradiction from the beginning to the end of his reign.

Nationalism is an excellent example of this. Of all the peoples who constitute the USSR and its sphere of influence, only the Russians (though later on the Chinese, the Yugoslavs, and the Albanians) were able to make nationalism—of course, under another name—into a component of their state ideology. Besides which, everywhere, "internationalism" only meant the forced acceptance of Russian tutelage. As soon as

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* Translated from the French by Steve Levine.

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Khrushchev announced the end of terror, ended the excommunication of Yugoslavia, abolished the bases in Finland and at Port Arthur and proclaimed the equality of peoples in the midst of the socialist community, nationalism immediately came to the surface again. Where it had an historically-founded anti-Russian flavor, it became one of the main charges leading to the Hungarian explosion and the Polish autumn of 1956.

It was the same with liberalism, which was swept aside for a long period of time. Traditionally, it constituted an historic goal in Eastern Europe (for example, in the Baltic Republics of the USSR), but its realization was rendered impossible by Stalinism and the Soviet occupation. In Czechoslovakia, liberalism represented precisely this historically repressed structure which, given the first opportunity, began to reclaim its rights. In the ideological domain, it was above all Marx—and not just the Lenin explicitly authorized by Khrushchev—who was going to reconquer his rights in the debris of Stalinist ideology, thus accelerating its decomposition.

The Communist Party, as the principal bearer of Stalinism and then of de-Stalinization, had to absorb the totality of this pressure on all sides and serve as a mold wherein the new components could again fuse into a unifying ideology. They thus had to nationalize, liberalize and make themselves Marxist (that was called the return to Leninism) in such a way as to be assured of remaining the sole representatives of power.

It quickly became apparent—and this was so not only in the case of Poland or Hungary but even in the USSR—that the end of mass terror and the general relaxation of control brought in their wake, in the ideological domain, an undesirable initiative from the base. And not only within the Party but also outside of it. Behind the torn curtain of Stalinist ideology, the crude reality began to reappear in the foreground, completely different from the representation which Stalinist ideology had given. The reality of old Russia, cruel, non-European Russia without Renaissance or Enlightenment, as well as Tolstoyan, orthodox Russia, the Russia of the inexhaustible patience of the mujik which transpired everywhere beneath the superficial layer of industrialization.

This conflict is characteristic of the whole Khrushchev period and only the particular components determined by the historical structure vary from one republic to the other, from one country to the other; its basic elements remain the same.

The Communist Parties of this period, with the Soviet Communist Party at the head, were constantly torn between the desire to keep the promises made after the Twentieth Congress and the impossibility of doing so while maintaining the basic Stalinist structures and without an adequate revision of the whole economic-political construction of Soviet and East European society. The latter would mean a profound shock, the end of the unlimited power of the party bureaucracy, of the army and the police, the end of the political stability that they alone could guarantee. For this reason, it was precisely they who were to oppose Khrushchev's politics and to lead to the fall of its author.

Czechoslovakia was doubtless the only country in Eastern Europe where it was possible to realize Khrushchev's conception of the transformation of Stalinist society obliquely through the transformation of the Party, just as the peaceful transition towards the next phase, not foreseen by Khrushchev but no less inevitable—that is to say, towards a form of self-managing socialist democracy—rested on a real group

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ownership of the means of production and no longer an essentially Stalinist one.

After the fall of Khrushchev, a period of search for a new politics came about, for a new basis to resolve the problem, which, on the one hand, would safeguard the monolithic forms of the Soviet state and its sphere of influence and, on the other, assure the growth of its military and economic power and consequently its international authority. The post-Stalinist period showed that the forms of government and of the organization of production which corresponded to the needs of industrialization of an immense, rich, backward, agrarian, illiterate and, moreover, multinational country, do not correspond absolutely to the requirements of economic development when certain or all of these premises are lacking. Moreover, they do not correspond to the requirements of the USSR in the sixties. All the economic reforms, even the most timid ones, lead finally to the same point, namely, the changing of the political system. Every relaxation of control and of central planning created centrifugal tendencies which lead to a greater autonomy, to a renovation of the market and, consequently, even to the question of the justification of the omnipotence of state property. It thus created, in connection with the claims which were born in the political and intellectual sphere, an entirely new concept, of which Czechoslovakia knew the most advanced realization.

Khrushchev's successors absolutely refused to take this road, aware of the dangers that it presented for the realization of the main tasks mentioned above. They knew also that the decomposition of Stalinist ideology was definitive, that the latter could henceforth serve only as a current formulation of Russian nationalism but that it remained absolutely useless outside the USSR and, in fact, even in its non-Russian provinces. The refusal of democratization with all its consequences and the impossibility of returning to mass terror demanded, towards the end of the sixties, a new solution whose foundation I shall call "the new social contract."

According to this contract, the citizens hand over to the State all of their individual and collective rights, and the State assures them in return stable employment at an average wage for a minimum contribution of labor and personal initiative. While the two parties respect the "contract," a certain equilibrium obtains between them. As soon as one of them breaks the contract, the equilibrium disappears, provoking a crisis or an explosion. When, for example, the State begins to demand an increase in the productivity of labor and when prices and wages are determined in relation to productivity, the citizen evidently responds with the following counter-claim: give us the right to organize ourselves, to decide freely our own fate, to negotiate freely the conditions under which we supply our labor, and give us the right and the possibility of deciding the use of the means of production, etc. If the necessary concessions are not made, the explosion is inevitable, as was the case in North Poland before Christmas 1970. In the opposite case, the contract is dissolved and a new equilibrium (eventually a dis-equilibrium) is established, as in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

This new social contract exists completely outside of ideology. Neither of the contracting parties has recourse to ideology, but each adopts as a point of departure the simple recognition of the status quo and of the interest in safeguarding it. This interest is the alpha and the omega of the contract's very existence. This is the essential novelty in relation to the Stalinist system in which ideology served as a justification (at least a posteriori) and terror as a guarantee that the measures which were

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in conflict with the fundamental interests of the workers would not provoke a disequilibrium, an explosion. Of course, the guarantors of the foundations of the contract remain those who have given birth to it: the Party bureaucracy, the army, the police. But given the impossibility or the difficulty of a return to mass terror in the European zone, they also have a vital interest in safeguarding and respecting the contract. For each explosion leads toward a confrontation which, in a given situation, results in uncertainty, something that is undesirable in itself. In the same way, the interest of the citizen is founded exclusively on the advantages which the contract brings to him. Guaranteed employment, well-being, and social security, minimum wear and tear, all seem—in the absence of another choice—to counterbalance the mediocrity of remuneration and the general standard of living, and to justify the abandonment of the status of real citizenship. The observation of the contract by the two parties does not lead beyond the reproduction of the status quo in the economic, political and social domain. In no sphere of activity does the contract free any creative potential. This is why a living tension perpetuates itself ceaselessly in the guise of stability and a certain prosperity. The constant introduction of new labor-power and its concentration on a decreasing number of "specialized" tasks is not enough for the State to assure the means for fulfilling the contract; the same holds for tolerating a whole series of "private capitalist" safety valves in the economic domain—for example, in Hungary, in Polish agriculture, etc. The citizen is an accessory in fulfilling the contract with respect to which, by his general passivity, he is simply receptive. It is up to the State to procure the means which are demanded in the functioning of the contract. Since the society based on the contract is essentially unproductive, the State must procure the means elsewhere. To that end, it has three sources at its disposal: forfeiture of its own sovereignty or what remains of it; sale of its own resources; and subsidies. The countervalue of subsidies for the application of the contract—whose weight rests on the USSR—represents, for the most part, acts which are of no value in themselves for any of the countries. They do not develop their own riches or resources, but contribute to the consolidation of the position of the USSR and its economic expansion (cf. the priority construction of a gas pipeline crossing through Czechoslovakia).

The application of the contract in Eastern Europe, where the standard of living before its integration into the Soviet zone of influence was incomparably superior to that in the USSR, demands from the latter a paradoxical performance. A part of its wealth is used to maintain a standard of living in the occupied countries superior to that of the majority of the Soviet people—and that includes also certain peripheral regions of the USSR (a situation therefore exactly opposite to that of the nineteenth century colonial powers). The relatively low standard of living and the fact that the Soviet citizen is renouncing rights which, in practice, he has never known, makes the application of the contract relatively easier in the USSR. But even there the post-Stalinist era brought some significant changes. The standard of living has seen a relative growth, the citizens have become more demanding, the decomposition of ideology has created a void which nationalism cannot fill and where there is too much room for a consumerist philosophy.

The immense wealth of the USSR, its size and the number of its inhabitants constitute not only the premises but also the guarantee of the application of the contract on the part of the State, on the part of power. In a country so large, no

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other force could maintain a system which, over a prolonged period of time and solely for reasons of power, is so unproductive, inefficient, and based exclusively on the passivity of the population. But this privileged situation also has its reverse side: because of its size and its population, Russia was already a great power before having known the industrialization which made it the second world power of the twentieth century. The constraints and obligations that this position implies—a program of nuclear and rocket armaments, a prestigious space program—weigh too heavily on the Soviet economy and their realization exhausts a substantial part of its indispensable resources, for example, in relation to the harmonious growth of the economy and of the standard of living. When the crisis of agricultural production reaches its apex, the USSR will find itself in a situation where the application of the social contract can become a problem. And, in such a situation, it can only rely on the same thing which supports its European satellites: subsidies. But subsidies can be obtained only in the West, especially in the USA—on the condition that the underwriters' interests are served.

These interests are not purely economic and are only now being formulated. Among them must be counted the fear that economic difficulties in the USSR will lead to a greater aggressiveness on its part and finally toward a military adventure which could only lead to a new world conflict, probably a nuclear one. But there are also other interests—for example, that of obtaining increased influence in Europe, blocking the development of a politics of emancipation, etc. But let's not jump over these steps. Let us state for the moment only that the new social contract, so characteristic of the present situation in Czechoslovakia, and on whose base Brezhnev's USSR has constructed its politics, is a logical, structured complex which has consequences for every domain and on a world-wide scale.

The Soviets' need to turn to the external world provides, for the first time in a long while and on the international level, the occasion for actively intervening in the subsequent evolution of the USSR as well as in Eastern and Central Europe. It is thus with just cause that Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov have drawn attention to the danger which would result for the rest of the world if it helps the Soviet regime fulfill this particular social contract which has been established with the people under its sphere of influence. The situation today is such that an international influence on the subsequent evolution of the Soviet zone is really possible. The politics of détente has meaning and real justification only if it is understood as a door open to its application.

II.

Intellectuals and the whole cultural domain have played an important role during the period of Khrushchev in Central and Eastern Europe. It is they who more or lesss filled the void created by the decomposition of Stalinist ideology, thinly veiled under the euphemism of "personality cult." From the example of Czechoslovakia—although the same main tendencies are perceptible elsewhere, even in the USSR—intellectual pressure proceeds in accordance with pressure from the economic front and with tendencies toward a greater emancipation, indeed even a real equality between the people and national minorities. Their common denominator is the emancipation of the personality, of the subject, whether it is a question of the individual in the intellectual and cultural domain, or of the subject in the larger

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sense, in the domain of the economy or of nationality, that is, the labor collective or the particular ethnic personality.

Under this pressure, the conception of democratic socialism came to be practically elaborated—even if vaguely so—as the renewal or creation of a structure that would be democratic, "liberal," and humanist, existing in a society of collective ownership. In this manner, a role logically fell to the intellectuals—a role which is theirs in all communities ripe for such transformations. Thus, the role of intellectuals in Eastern Europe has been, in this respect, similar to the one they played in Europe in the past, particularly in eighteenth-century France. It is no accident that the parallelism of roles also leads to a parallelism of objectives, of means, of language and, especially in the USSR, to a parallelism of ideological positions.

The role of intellectuals in the period covering generally the second half and, in diverse degrees, the first half of the fifties (in the case of Czechoslovakia, also the second half of the sixties), has often been analyzed in a detailed manner. Consequently, let us begin by posing this question: what is their role today in the period of the "new social contract"?

The "contract," which is the framework of the post-Khrushchev period, delimits its content rather precisely. Its goal is not to change, but to maintain, the status quo. The possibilities for change are consequently limited by the central objective, which is also the premise of all official political thought. Everything is good that serves to maintain the existing equilibrium and, conversely, everything is bad that could disturb it. In this conception, the intellectual in the strict sense (it is convenient here to distinguish the intelligentsia from the intellectuals) has practically no place. Either he accepts the status of "citizen" tied to the contract, or he becomes part of the State. In both cases, he abandons his function as an intellectual and ceases to be the one who questions, who searches, doubts, and makes truth the principal criterion of his political and moral positions. As soon as he has aligned himself in this way, he is suppressed as an intellectual and becomes the simple executor of the will of one of the two contracting parties. Neither of these two parties—not only subjectively, but also objectively—has any interest in his existence nor in the fulfillment of his role. For, among other things, the intellectual tends ceaselessly to question the status quo, the existing equilibrium. The more fragile this equilibrium and this status quo are, the greater the fear that intellectuals will upset it and in this way damage the interests of the two parties.

Thus, intellectuals again find themselves in a marginal situation whose historical precedents we all know. The result of such a situation can be the precarious equilibrium of the totalitarian systems as well as the prosperity of the liberal systems which, in such moments, do not repress intellectuals but make them, within the general consensus, something useless, superfluous and embarrassing for society (Anglo-Saxon societies are the best examples of this). Intellectuals in Eastern European society are forced to become Cassandras reduced to silence. It becomes increasingly more difficult for them to find listeners even when, in spite of all repressive measures, they succeed in making some contacts. When the rupture of the equilibrium, the crisis of the system based on the social contract, decides in favor of the intellectual Cassandras and eventually gives them a new occasion to intervene in the social field, the latter are tempted to turn their backs on this possibility in response to the preceding indifference. Such a refusal is, however, worse than the

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preceding isolation and logically leads to intellectual self-destruction which, although understandable in relation to their past experience, nevertheless remains an act of self-destruction. (The attitude of Polish intellectuals at the time of the crisis of the contract and the rupture of the equilibrium in December 1970 is an example of this.)

On the other hand, it is true that the interest-structure of the "contract" is itself an ideal base for provoking waves of anti-intellectualism, and there is no lack of occasion in this respect. But even the intellectual is a being motivated by interest—interest not only for his sheer existence, but more precisely for his existence as an intellectual. And the condition of the latter is precisely the rights abolished in the framework of the "contract." By virtue of this fact, the intellectual is forced (if he wants to keep his identity, to remain himself) to refuse the contract and to act, literally to *live*, against it. For he alone loses his identity from the fact of the contract; a worker remains a worker, a doctor a doctor, a bureaucrat a bureaucrat, and a peasant, a peasant. And the intellectual? From provincial schoolmaster to philosopher, writer, artist, he is crushed by the wheel until he is only a shred, nothing more than a name. The intellectual defends himself against this annihilation by simple instinct for preservation. His conscience does not authorize him to change identities; and because the application of the contract does not leave him in peace for a single instant but exposes him to incessant attack—in the literal as well as the figurative sense—he must defend himself, attack, deny and condemn. In the general spiritual void which is the condition and the consequence of the contract, every effort, even the most modest and discreet, on the part of the intellectual to safeguard the minimum conditions necessary for his existence, becomes a subversive activity whose echo is much greater in the aforementioned void than it would be in a normal context. It is for this reason that intellectuals are, in the society founded on the new social contract, the main and often sole target of open repression. They alone become—in the name of their own existential interests—the spokesmen of those interests suppressed or simply hidden by the contract: national interests, interests of groups or individuals, interests which were supposedly eliminated from the consciousness of the citizens until the next crisis, the next rupture of the equilibrium.

Thus, there is no reason to suspect their testimony, to listen to their voice with distrust. In fact, their voice constitutes the only real and authentic testimony on the situation created by the contract. It is the only truthful deposition on the spiritual climate, on what is breathing beneath the surface, ready to emerge at the time of the coming rupture. For reasons we can understand, their voice is often cut off from the world context but nevertheless remains well anchored within its own situation. We cannot understand it if we try to transpose it into the complex political and social classes of liberal societies. Its context is completely different. Only through their mediation can we grasp the structure born out of the contract, that which is ripening behind it and which will confront us when one party or the other—or both—breaks the contract. On the one hand, it would be a question of attempting to instantly re-establish, without restriction, all rights and particulars suspended by the contract. On the other, it would be a question of attempting to reestablish Stalinist terror, using the most modern methods. In either case, the role which will again fall to the intellectuals will be, as so often in the past, to kindle the flames that will consume them—but with the difference that this time the role will be public again and understood by their fellow countrymen.

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We know by experience the weight of the intellectual's burden and the extent of his occasional desire to get rid of it without disowning himself. This legitimate aspiration, also motivated by interest, often seeks a solution in a radical attitude in the heart of a socialist movement. The intellectuals, especially those of the younger generation, sought a solution for themselves and their kind in a total integration with one of the components of the movement, thinking that this integration, the result of a free decision, a choice, would rid them of the burden that their internal liberty imposed on them, while safeguarding their intellectual personality. Up to the present time, socialist experience has shown—and this is so for the West as well as for the East—that the desire had created the idea, and the claim of a possible radical transformation of the intellectuals' situation in society was pure illusion. All that any intellectual has obtained by taking such an option is his own liquidation with the help of arguments that he himself furnished for this liquidation. Yet we have seen, and still see today, how difficult it is to undertake the opposite road, to reconstitute the lost personality and its intellectual weight, to return crestfallen to it, to its Sisyphian burden.

Intellectual resistance in Eastern Europe, in the countries of the new social contract, no longer appears as a weakness in this perspective but more likely the result of a new situation which it is useful to study in detail. The European Renaissance and Enlightenment, liberal society and capitalism as it has developed on the European continent and in the United States, have made the individual and his integrity, his rights and his theoretical or at least relative liberty, the foundation of modern sociopolitical structures. Humanist thought which developed in reaction to the thought of the Middle Ages, begins with the conception of man as being determined by his need for liberty and for his own thought and action. The new social contract, produced by Soviet practice and whose background and past are completely different, simply denies this conception. It begins with the idea that the free man is his own enemy. His liberty makes the rational use of social potential impossible and as such, is in opposition to his most essential interests.

Inversely, he who has renounced active participation in the elaboration of politics and the economy, limiting himself to a role of executor, *becomes truly free only* in exchange for his non-engagement, his irresponsibility and a relative material security. In order for this "liberty" to be total, it is enough to suppress the intellectual and social consciousness, to suppress—or prevent the birth of—the intellectual as classical or humanist Europe has known him, and to install the reign of prefabricated consciousness, one that is artifically created and founded exclusively on the purely existential, material interest (in the narrow sense of the term) of the individual.

Obviously, this is not a matter of the first attempt of this kind in history. But, for the first time in modern European history, it has lasted long enough to allow for an in-depth study (evaluation) and to justify the questions raised by Zamiatin, Orwell, Huxley and others concerning the destiny of the humanist conception of man. Is this conception of man, and with it, the classical and humanist conception of culture, a simple historical category? Is European humanism only an historical detour and the "new social contract," on the contrary, the result of the direct transition from the Middle Ages to socialism which the European tradition only complicates?

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In this perspective, intellectual resistance in Eastern Europe will perhaps prove to be a much more important and historically more decisive force than certain people were ready to admit. In this case, if the humanist conception of man is erroneous and if socialism is incompatible with this alternative—contrary to the thought of the founders of European socialism who were born of this tradition—this resistance is really only the last bastion of a past condemned to disappear. And one would have difficulty imagining how the European experience, the European alternative, would be able to adopt socialism as a position. This interpretation would justify the defenders of the conservative European alternative.

However, there is another possibility: the anomaly is not the humanist conception of man but rather the Eastern conception. In this case socialism does not imply the abandonment of the European conception, and it becomes a possibility for Europe as a whole. Or, to put it differently, it is what it was for those who conceived it as a European idea. In this case, the beacon of Eastern European intellectual resistance, pointing to the outside, becomes a question of life or death for the European socialist Left. If it represents the future rather than the past of Eastern Europe, the European socialist Left is its most legitimate ally. And, in the end, this alliance serves its most essential interests, its own future.

However that may be, the greater portion of non-Russian Eastern and Central Europe is the product of the same humanist past as European socialism. Its historical structure is similar as well as its memory and its consciousness. Even if this structure is only a European anomaly, the essential part of Eastern and Central Europe shares in this anomaly.

Its consciousness can only perceive the current state of affairs as a colonization by a foreign culture. Just as the European powers violently colonized Africa and Asia, it is the forced installation and establishment of foreign structures. The attempt made under Khrushchev to synthesize the new social contract with the humanist tradition has clearly turned out to be a squaring of the circle. Concretely, for non-Russian Eastern and Central Europe, this means either the creation of a humanist tradition in the East or a break with the Eastern alternative. In both cases, the role of intellectuals will be exceptionally important. It is difficult to imagine that this voice—not individually but as a manifestation of the repressed structure of historical consciousness—could be suppressed.

In this perspective, we can examine the Czechoslovak problem, the Czechoslovak experience, and its meaning for European socialism. We should not be deceived by different contexts, formulations, languages, positions, and intellectual jargon. The voice of Eastern European intellectuals, isolated by the new social contract and thus thrust into a fundamental and historically permanent role, is *our own* voice—even if it comes from a different context and with different nuances. We cannot blame these voices if they occasionally express European humanism reduced to its essence, and torn from the economic, political, social and class context of the contemporary world. Because it is foreign to their experience, they speak to us with our voice, but from another planet. It is the voice of our historical experience and of our faith in man as the creator of history and of himself. As long as it speaks and is understood, it is the witness of our existence and of our conception of socialism as a free society. If it is silenced, European socialism would be seriously threatened.

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Unorganized History versus Organized Labor: A Reply to John Zerzan

by David Looman

When Harry Bridges calls for the formation of "one big national labor movement," he thinks of *The Manifesto*, and usually goes on to add, "Workers of the world, unite!" Romantics and old men listen to him and dream again of the Wobblies, and One Big Union. When John Zerzan hears Bridges, he thinks of National Socialism.[2]

One might conclude from the quality of Zerzan's vision that he knows little about the labor movement, past or present. Unfortunately, his article, "Organized Labor versus 'The Revolt Against Work'," does little to impeach that conclusion, and gives rise to the additional thought that he also knows little about common logic. The article is a compilation of false and misleading statements, strung together with innuendo, smear, non sequitur, and logical contradiction. For example, on one page (203), Zerzan would seem to have us believe that being for strikes, and being against them, being for workers' rights, and being against them, are all equally good evidence at one and the same time for union and government treachery.

Let's start with some of the obviously false statements in Zerzan's account. He claims that the percentage of rejected contracts rose to 14.2% in 1967, levelling off since then to 12% annually.[3] In fact, the figures show no such levelling off at all, dropping to 9.9% in 1971, and barely making it up over 10% in 1972.[4]

Zerzan claims that the GM workers wildcatted after the contract was signed with the UAW in 1955, 1958 and 1961. False. In 1955, the workers walked out after the expiration of the contract, and went back to work when the national contract was signed. In 1958 and 1961, the walkouts were authorized strikes, and were authorized in the course of bargaining over many of those issues of working conditions that Zerzan claims the UAW does not bargain about.[5]

When it comes to the content of collective bargaining, Zerzan is wrong about more than just the UAW. Zerzan draws his examples of restricted bargaining from the industrial unions, and then seems to want to make the argument that unions per se do not bargain on work rules, methods, and conditions. He thus conveniently ignores the crafts, where, for all their faults, job control has been the rule, not the exception.[6] He is also wrong about industrial unions—the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and Steel quickly come to mind as exceptions;[7] and ducking the crafts means that he does not

1. John Zerzan, "Organized Labor versus 'The Revolt Against Work:' The Critical Contest," *Telos* 21, pp. 194-206.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 204.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 201.
4. *Annual Reports*, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.
5. *New York Times*, October 3, 1958; *NYT*, September 12, 1961. The Union's 1961 statement on p. 20 may help clarify the relationship between national and local bargaining and national and local issues about which Zerzan seems a bit confused. For Zerzan's claim, see p. 195.
6. For a brief introduction to the trades, see Robert Blauner, *Alienation and Freedom* (Chicago, 1964).
7. Yes, Steel. Even anti-union historians concede that the 116-day strike in '59 was over work rules. See, e.g., Stanley Aronowitz, *False Promises* (New York, 1973), pp. 381-82.

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have to deal with the difficult, but enlightening, question of the role of "craft-consciousness" in the development of the American working class.

In another misleading statement, Zerzan claims that G.M. loaned the UAW $23 million a month during the 1970 strike. Actually, as Zerzan's source makes clear, the G.M. "loan" was actually an insurance payment for workers' health and life insurance —and a G.M. public relations gimmick.[8]

Methodologically, the article is terrifying. One of Zerzan's favorite argument forms is guilt by association: when labor and management come down on the same side of an issue—e.g., California's campaign spending "reform" legislation—Zerzan cites it as an example of collusion and community of interest.[9] (How one has a community of interest where both favor substitute bills which would cut the other's throat is beyond me.) Zerzan does this, of course, while upholding the NAM-John Birch Society line on the open shop.

Another favorite type of argument is the "teleological equivocation." He strings together the following monster: (1) To stabilize capitalism requires a strong, centralized labor movement; (2) mergers and closed shops create a strong, centralized labor movement; (3) therefore, the point of mergers and closed shops is to stabilize capitalism.[10] There is one logical fallacy and one fallacious construction in that argument.

Zerzan's primary argument form, however, is the "juxtaposition-innuendo." For example: "Workers and the unions continued to be at odds over conditions of work during the period. In auto, for example, the 1955 contract between the United Auto Workers and General Motors did nothing to check the 'speed-up" or facilitate the settlement of local shop grievances."[11] Zerzan means by this, I assume, that the workers wanted and the union did not want to do something about these issues. Notice, however, that he does not say so blatantly, since to do so might directly obligate him to some honest intellectual enterprise. He might have to introduce some evidence concerning things like the attitudes and wishes of the union's leadership, the actual course of the bargaining, the relative priorities of the rank-and-file's concerns, and so on. He might even want to explain why the ordinary man suffers from the delusion that the sheer naked power of G.M. is the operative constraint here.

However, by coupling the innuendo with an allegation about the contract's weaknesses, and then following by a (false) laundry list of wildcat strikes, Zerzan hopes to escape without doing any work at all. One is meant to acquire the conviction that the elected leadership of the UAW is opposed to the wishes of its membership, and acts accordingly.

On another page, Zerzan says: "If most of the literature of the 'revolt against work' has left unions out of their discussions, a brief look at some features of specific worker actions from 1970 through 1973 will help underline the comments made above concerning the necessarily anti-union nature of this revolt"[12] ("necessarily"!). After defining his parameters as "the revolt against work" and the anti-union activities of the

8. William Serrin, *The Company and the Union* (New York, 1974), p. 202. For Zerzan, see p. 199.
9. Zerzan, p. 205.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 202-204.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

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workers involved in same, he proceeds to mention the following occasions:[13]

1. The 1970 postal workers strike. He himself states that the issue here was not "the revolt against work."
2. The 1970 Teamsters' wildcat. The issue was money.[14]
3. The Wall Street Hard Hat demonstration. Anti-union?
4. Homicide in 1970 at a Chrysler plant.
5. William Serrin's highly questionable account of the 1970 G.M.-UAW strike. Zerzan introduces this as "a classic example of the anti-employee nature of the conventional strike. . .," ending his search for evidence to support his original claim.

Zerzan has so much trouble finding evidence when he can't generate a questionable or tangential anecdote that sometimes he just dispenses with it altogether: "Aside from related economic considerations, the freeze and the ensuing controls were adopted because the unions needed government help in restraining the workers."[15] The mind boggles! I'm not even sure what that proposition means, let alone how one would go about gathering evidence for its validity. Zerzan certainly doesn't give any hints as to what the evidence might look like. The evidence we do have is that Meany and Woodcock walked off the Board in protest when it began to operate as a real constraint on workers. Zerzan cannot accept that, saying it was a change in policy due to rank-and-file pressure—a pressure he is unable to document, and a pressure which is not supposed to exist, according to his argument.

Zerzan's account is almost as misleading about worker discontent as it is about unions. Reading his remarks about the United Mine Workers, for example, one would never know that a considerable amount of the opposition to Arnold Miller comes from workers longing for the good old days—of Tony Boyle! Zerzan is saved from disaster, however, by the simple fact that no one these days *can be* too terribly misleading about the revolt against work: there just aren't enough facts to make strong claims one way or the other.

In 1972, everybody thought that Lordstown was the Sarajevo of Workers War I, and about 140 books and articles (Zerzan cites only a very partial list) were published reporting and analyzing the revolt against work. By 1973, however, the bottom had dropped out of the hard data. Absenteeism was down, sabotage was down, strikes and contract rejections were down. Study showed that the quit-rate was a function of the business cycle, and it too was dropping as unemployment rose. Examination of survey material showed a remarkably high and constant percentage of satisfied responses to job satisfaction questions, ever since Marx's first survey in 1880. Studies were re-discovered which showed that a significant number of workers liked dull, repetitive jobs. And a re-examination of the survey data on issues showed that for blue-collar workers, money was still the number one priority—and why not? Affluence was always a myth, and workers' real wages have been declining almost steadily since 1967.

In view of the data at their disposal, union officials are to be forgiven if they move very cautiously on the worker discontent issue; if they find something faintly obscene about $18,000 a year professors[16] claiming that $8,000 a year workers don't really want

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 198-199.
14. *NYT*, May 1, 1970.
15. Zerzan, pp. 201-202.
16. Editors' note: lest John Zerzan be confused with these "$18,000 a year professors," it should be made clear that he is a $180 a month teaching assistant at the History Department of the University of Southern California. Latest word has it that he has just been fired from that job!

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more money; and if they talk more like the Marx in Volume III of *Capital* than the Marx of the *Paris Manuscripts*. Clearly we do need constantly to re-analyze and challenge the role of organized labor, and we do need desperately to analyze and to transform the relationship of workers to their work. However, one must not begin by assuming a crude conspiracy theory about union leaders, and by postulating the present existence of a revolutionary class-conscious proletariat, and then stretching, distorting, and, on occasion, fabricating, the facts and reasoning to fit.

Work, Culture, and Crisis: A Reply to Zerzan and Looman

by John Alt

"Work," "the worker," and "shop floor rebellion" constitute the heart, the nuts and bolts, of traditional or old left theory and practice in both the United States and Europe. Built within Marx's theory itself is the assumption (prescription?) that the degrading conditions of industrial labor, due to its status as commodity, coupled with its socially collective character and increasing poverty, would lead workers to overthrow that class responsible for its degradation. That capital, through its creation and exploitation of labor, would produce its own gravediggers in the proletariat became an unquestioned assumption in the development of much of the left. Certainly, the left has disagreed on the type of consciousness formed by workers in the context of alienating labor. On the one hand, objective work conditions are sufficient for generating authentic class consciousness and rebellion, while on the other, such conditions only generate a trade union consciousness which necessitates the leadership of a class conscious vanguard. Both positions agree on the importance of the dominated class as "worker" and the factory as the locus of class conflict in advanced capitalist society. Whatever the form of consciousness or the type of political organization necessary for class struggle, it is assumed that working conditions are instrumental in the generation of class consciousness. Most of the active politics of the traditional left has taken the form of organizing around shop floor issues—wages, shorter work week or hours, working conditions, and the control over production. This orientation has built up a powerful theoretical, cultural, and organizational tradition which persists today. When work rebellions occur, such as the one at Lordstown, there is always renewed hope among radicals that workers are rekindling their interest in the century-old concern and tradition of the left.

Notwithstanding their different interpretations of American workers' outlook, both Zerzan[1] and Looman[2] illustrate the continuity and weaknesses of this tradition. Both writers laud and defend the worker, one from the viewpoint of natural resistance and worker's control against the hierarchical oppression of corporations and unions, and the other from the viewpoint of material needs and union representativeness against the exploitation of the corporation and the romantic unrealism of petty bourgeois intellectuals.

1. *Telos* 21 (Fall 1974), pp. 194-206.
2. In this issue of *Telos*.

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Notwithstanding his passion for the massive accumulation of facts which are assumed to speak for themselves, Zerzan's interpretations and conclusions seem clear enough. In the face of constant exploitation, speed-ups, deteriorating working conditions, and authoritarian control structures both at work and in the union, sufficient evidence indicates that many workers do not passively adapt, but actively resist in the form of slow-downs, wildcat strikes, heavy turn over, absenteeism, and sabotage. Zerzan takes these as indicators for workers' "natural" struggle against alienated labor and the power of capital, and reveals further the worker's "natural" interest in regaining or obtaining control over the work process. The meaning of "the revolt against work" is therefore the attempt to gain control over production so as to institute a more dignified and humane work process. The unions, on their part, have turned against workers' desires and struggles for control and in consort with corporations and the state have traded off these demands for monetary ones. In exchange, unions are obligated to discipline workers and guarantee a stable and material-oriented work force. In order to deal effectively with a centralized corporate state, unions themselves become centralized, thus forsaking claims to be democratically responsive to rank-and-file members and becoming another repressive component in the stabilization of society. Since unions are out of touch with workers' needs and interests, the modern revolt against work is also a revolt against the authority of unions since they have forsaken control over work. There is, therefore, a contradiction between the desires and angers of the workers and the policies of union leadership, which is expressed in increasing defiance and resistance against the union bureaucracy seen as a junior partner with corporations in the exploitation and domination of labor. Zerzan even hints that were it not for the unions' oppressive power, the workers would be organizing for the abolition of alienation or at least some control over their own working conditions.

From within the union hierarchy, Looman sees a totally different process. In the first place, the revolt against work is not as extensive as Zerzan claims but, instead, satisfaction with the work process is the norm for American workers. From this it follows that issues concerning the quality of work and control over it are not the workers' predominant interests. What concerns them most are precisely those issues that Zerzan sees as being imposed by unions and the corporate state, i.e., security, wages, and material benefits.Given the marginal subsistance levels of many industrial and service workers and the decline in real income over the last decade, it is only reasonable to expect that monetary issues rather than issues of quality and control should dominate workers' consciousness. Given that workers' highest priorities are material needs, Looman cannot see how anyone could argue that unions have conspired with management and government against workers' expressed wishes. As in the liberal interpretation of the state and the free market definition of the corporation, unions are pictured as reflecting and responding to the real demands of their constituents. Looman cannot see the quality of work as either a problem or an issue since it is not an empirical tendency among workers.

While both writers uphold the importance of work and workers, they claim different "truths" concerning their political tendencies and meanings. What must be critically examined are the relative moments of truth in each position as well as whether or not the problem of work and the shop floor has been surpassed by new developments in advanced American capitalism.

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An important element of truth in Zerzan's analysis is the "collusion" or perceived mutuality of interest between corporate and union management. This is an insufficiently understood aspect of modern political economy upon which Zerzan sheds further light. With the recognition of mass industrial unions in the 1930s, corporations sought to use and manipulate these organizational structures for economic expansion and increased productivity. The priorities of capital—profit maximization through expansion—came to be defined as national priorities, thus entailing the apparent self interest of unions, government, as well as corporations. All three parties have in their own way benefited from post-war internal economic expansion through the development and proliferation of mass-produced commodities and new credit systems, external economic expansion by means of multi-national corporations, and through the development of a permanent war economy. As long as corporations have been able to increase their surplus from productivity gains they have been able to pass off to workers increased wages and benefits. A new social consciousness emerged from below and was encouraged from above to the effect that the fundamental problems of the economy had been solved and that adequate and increased productivity would result in higher standards of living for everyone. The "good life" came to be socially defined in terms of increased consumption—the necessary otherness of increased production. With the advent of consumer culture, American workers came to define happiness and satisfaction in terms of ever higher rates of consumption. The traditional problems of work, of increased work paces, and large hierarchical unions, were seen as the prices paid for the benefits of a healthy capitalism.

The post-war pattern of labor-corporate relations, with the assistance of federal law, has stabilized the position of big business and big labor within these priorities. Long-term contracts, industry-wide bargaining, grievance procedures and arbitration, have helped consolidate the position of each within the framework of the post-war consensus. Long-term contracts assure the corporations of known wage costs which facilitate long-range planning—a practice necessary for the hegemony of huge corporations. Unions benefit through short-range economic security which facilitates their own domestic plans for saving, credit-buying, and consumption. Industry-wide bargaining gives the corporation uniform wage rates throughout the industry, thereby eliminating cost differences between firms and maintaining common prices in oligopolistic industries. The extensive use of grievance procedures and arbitration protects firms against unauthorized strikes and work stoppages, while arbitration procedures guarantee the formal resolution of differences through compromise and negotiation within the national consensus. What is clear is that corporations, since the 1930s, have sought to integrate unions into the structure and ideology of capital's priorities: growth and expansion. No longer treated as class enemies, both workers and union leaders have shifted from the fear of economic insecurity (the "stick") into the promise and relative pay-off of monetary gains (the "carrot"). The union bureaucracy came to offer powerful and affluent positions where individuals could leave the drudgery of the shop floor and, with the proper orientation, perhaps reach high-paying positions in the hierarchy.

It is unfortunate that Looman does not see that this process was initiated and used by corporations as a strategy to both expand capital and integrate the working class. The Steelworkers Union in the early 50s, for example, gave up its right to strike over local grievances in return for the guarantee of binding arbitration. This assured the

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worker, his union, and corporate management of continuity in production and wages without the interference of shop-floor grievances, many of which revolved around issues of personnel and process control. Scott Greer succinctly describes the transformation in union-corporation relations during the late 40s and early 50s as follows: "The corporation thus regained effective full control over the work process. As a result, the corporation could increase the amount of profit realized per worker. It could also intensify the special oppression of the black workers; foremen could now assign them discriminatorily to the worst tasks without real union opposition. This corporate racism had the additional benefit of weakening the workers' solidarity. For its part, the union abolished shop stewards, replacing them with one full-time elected 'griever.' This of course further attenuated rank-and-file control over the union bureaucracy, aided in depoliticizing the workers and gave further rein to the union's inclination to mediate worker and employer differences at the point of production, rather than sharpen the lines of struggle in the political economy as a whole."[3] Steelworkers accepted this trade off for substantial wage increases, together with improved pension and welfare plans by the steel corporations. If issues of work control were important to the average steelworker, economic security seemed to hold much greater priority in his interpretation of needs.

It is not historically clear that union bureaucrats *sold out* the workers in replacing issues of control with quantitative increases in material benefits. Certainly, in this trade-off the unions sold out the left elements in unions who had been advocating in the 30s and 40s the political importance of maintaining and increasing control over the work process. But the bulk of the American industrial working class has not been left-oriented and the crises and hardships imposed upon them by an unstable economy have generated a consciousness of scarcity and survival. It is out of these conditions, formed during the period form 1920 to 1940, that an explanation of the integration of the working class into the structure and consensus of monopoly capital must be sought. It is much too simplistic and politically naive to blame unions for selling out the presumed revolutionary interests of the industrial work force. To be sure, most union leaders have used their positions for obtaining fat salaries, status, and a means for escaping the shop floor, and thus often act out of private self interest; yet, the real income of significant sectors of the work force has increased, allowing economic security and a higher standard of living than what existed in the period of the formation of the mass industrial worker. That the union can be chided for not being revolutionary in any left sense is certainly true, but much the same can be said for the average rank and file member. In a sense then, unions have in fact responded to workers' needs. The crucial question here regards how human needs and organizational structures are shaped by the total process of capital reproduction, not one of sell-out.

Any discussion about work resistance must be sensitive to the uneven nature of this phenomenon both in its extent and its meaning. Zerzan creates the impression that the revolt against work is widespread, affecting both blue and white collar occupations and a wide range of industries and service organizations. With an assortment of facts, observations, and reportings, Zerzan presents a nebulous image of the whole topic in a very uncritical manner. It will not do to claim that all work conditions under a system

3. Scott Greer, "The 'Liberation' of Gary, Indiana," *Society*, 8:3 (January 1971), pp. 31-32.

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of commodity production have an equal potential for revolt and resistance, and all one has to do is read newspapers, articles, and books on the subject to find evidence for such revolt.[4] Certainly, resistance occurs and it is "real," but the key questions are who is participating in such revolts and what is the meaning of their resistance.

Shop floor rebellion seems to be specific to certain industries, occupations, age, and sex groups. Resistance and revolt is certainly a dominant feature of the auto and steel industries, or those dominated by mass production or assembly line technologies and processes associated with humanly intolerable and unsafe working conditions. While such industries may constitute the foundation of the economy, they are in no way its major participants. Work resistance also seems to be characteristic of certain public service occupations, such as teaching, social work, and medicine, but not governmental work in general. On the other hand, there is no evidence that the millions of scientists and engineers employed by private corporations are resisting their equal status with production workers as hired commodities. The revolt against work appears to be heavily dominated by young workers, both in mass production industries and in the public sector, while older workers in these sectors seem content with the material benefits that the system grants. Finally, work resistance is probably more predominant among men than women since men dominate in production industries while women dominate in sales and clerical positions. The lack of overt resistance on the part of significant sectors of the labor force cannot be attributed solely to the integration of unions into the structure and consensus of monopoly capital.

Given the cases that Zerzan cites as evidence, work revolt appears as an uneven phenomenon resisting any universal interpretation. It takes manifold forms—sabotage, clandestine redesigning of tools for greater efficiency or less effort, wildcat strikes, absenteeism, turnover, etc.—and certainly the conscious needs and motivations for such actions may be equally diverse. Much rebellion in the auto industry is against work speed-ups, but does the resistance indicate the desire to control the production of the line? More than likely it reflects a simple desire for the habits and comfortableness of the older pace which allowed the worker to operate with adequate rest intervals, permitted daydreaming and family and leisure planning. The revolt against the increased work-pace in this case is a purely defensive measure indicating protest against an excessively de-humanized work process. Absenteeism, chronic in auto and steel industries among other, reflects the younger ages of the

4. There is a methodological problem inherent in Zerzan's use of secondary sources of which he does not seem to be aware. To claim, on the basis of published sources, that there is a revolt against work and-or that the work revolt is increasing is particularly misleading. There are times when it becomes politically or journalistically fashionable to intensely cover some topic of presumed national interest. The work revolt of the late sixties-early seventies is an instance of this. For radicals who were looking for new "agents" with the passing of the student movement and for corporate managers and their spokesmen who focused on work revolt as a new problem of productivity, the problem and rebellion of American workers came to national attention. There is a certain amount of truth to these claims, but it overlooks the fact that resistance to work has persisted since the dawn of industrial capitalism and that it is never necessarily something new or on the rise. The fifties has been seen as a period of relative quiet and affluence for American workers with little overt conflict. Aronowitz has destroyed this myth with his description of work rebellion in various industries and plants. See Stanley Aronowitz, *False Promises: The Shaping of American Working Class Consciousness* (New York, 1973). The point is that published sources are somewhat poor indicators of the prevalence or intensity of work rebellion, and certainly constitute no clue as to its sociological meaning.

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workers, many unmarried, whose material needs do not require the pay-checks of full and over-time work. Absenteeism further reflects greater interests among both young and old workers for longer periods or blocks of leisure time, particularly longer or three to four day weekends so they can take off with friends and family on hunting, fishing, and camping trips. Moreover, overt resistance to speed-ups, boredom, specialization, and authoritarianism may simply reflect the desire for a more leisurely-paced job with a minimum of authoritarian supervision and greater respect. Therefore, many typical forms of industrial shop-floor resistance can be equally interpreted as defensive actions seeking to minimize the inhuman consequences of production or to escape production, rather than control it.

This is not to deny evidence that some professional and technical workers in the public service sector have raised and struck for issues which involved the control of the work process and its service. Yet one would be hard put to find such evidence for any category of worker in the goods-producing sector. For instance, since the late 60s teachers have rebelled against their dependent situation in the schools and have often demanded participation in school policy-making to determine the conditions of their work, the nature and quality of educational programs, and fiscal matters. In the face of deteriorating schools and increased work loads, demands increased for better programs, more money, and the right to determine policy with respect to the former. However, no teacher strike or organization in America came anywhere close to linking their problems as educational workers to the larger processes of class relations and economic priorities. Teachers have not analyzed the problems of the schools in terms of the expansion and capital requirements of corporate development and its relation to the fiscal crisis of the schools and municipal government. Moreover, the social and legal laws of bourgeois society prevent school boards and managers from normally acknowledging such demands, and coupled with the protracted nature of long strikes and the compromise nature of the negotiated bargaining process, the majority of teachers in these instances were willing to settle for higher salaries, better work conditions, and perhaps an advisory function in the policy process. But, ultimately, the meaning of the teacher revolt is an attempt to rationalize the problems of the schools and democratize bureaucratic control structures more in line with professional expectations.

If we acknowledge that embedded in the work revolt is the impulse for control and autonomy, however inchoately expressed, the problem remains as to its self-sufficiency for either controlling or transforming the conditions of alienation. The concept of worker's self-activity or spontaneity as sufficient grounds for the creation of new forms of struggle and change overlooks the equally important role of intellectual and organizational mediation. We can agree with Zerzan that unions have played an integrating role in controlling such tendencies and that they have ceased to be anything but the defenders of the workers' elementary interests. In view of this, where is the new organizational mediation to come from? The workers themselves? New union bureaucrats? An outside socialist party? If we assume that the left can link up with the inchoate revolt against work and provide, at minimum, the political culture necessary for new organizational and intellectual leadership, then what would it mean to make explicit a demand for workers' control over production? Could the alienation of labor be sufficiently overcome with the socialization or democratization of industries and offices?

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The forces of production are developed by the capitalist class with two goals in mind: a greater extraction of surplus value and *increased social domination*. The goals of exploitation and domination can be illustrated by the changes wrought by the introduction of mass production technologies and processes around the turn of the century and the First World War. Prior to their introduction, much industrial work was under the direct control and direction of master craftsmen who were organized into powerful trade associations and unions. The master craftsman and skilled journeyman had polyvalent knowledge and control over much of the production process and combined within their persons the skills and labor that is now characteristic of un- and semi-skilled labor and managers, that is, they combined both mental and manual labor. The skilled character of the work process coupled with the power of the union over the organization of work (work pace, hiring) placed severe constraints on the new captains of industry.

The mass production assembly line (Fordism), among other technologies, was introduced and developed to break these constraints. With the more "efficient" rationalization (Taylorism) of the work process, industrialists and their new engineers sought both greater markets and profits, as well as absolute control over the organization of work. With these changes the skill structure of industries was equally transformed as the importance of craft and skilled workers declined while the importance of semiskilled workers increased. Specialized machines were introduced which permitted a swifter work pace and lower production costs. The occupational skills of the craft and skilled worker were broken up with each "part" taken up by specialized semiskilled and un-skilled workers. Workers' control, initiative, and autonomy rapidly diminished and was replaced by activities performed under precise directives prescribed and supervised by engineers and managers. There was a corresponding need for greater work discipline and submission to orders. A new managerial and supervisory stratum emerged whose functions were to organize and direct the discrete operations of semiskilled and unskilled workers.

What has become identified as Fordism and Taylorism was thus undertaken not because of the progressive enlightenment of efficiency, science,and technology, but because of the need for increased profits and absolute control, a process which necessitated the destruction of the master craftsman and skilled worker through the introduction of mass production technologies. Having destroyed the industrial or skill base or the traditionally-powerful craft unions, industrial entrepreneurs no longer had to worry about the problem of control since the newly-created semi-skilled workers' position within the production process precluded the skills and knowledge necessary for control of the production process. This process radically exacerbated the split between manual and mental labor by creating specialized machine tenders who only understood a minute aspect of the entire process of production. Thus, the elimination of skills, the increase in the work pace and in work discipline, and the emergence of managerial hierarchies went hand in hand. In this process for increased profit and greater control, efficiency, science, and technology are instrumentalized as means of class domination by capital.[5]

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5. These processes can be observed in most great American industries during this era. The whole process has been described by Mario Tronti in "Workers and Capital," *Telos* 14 (Winter 1972), pp. 25-62. Cf. also Sergio Bologna, "Class Composition and the Theory of the Party,"

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The specialization or parcelization of work skills, along with the introduction of elaborate managerial hierarchies of control, dominate the organization of work in both blue and white collar industries, offices, and increasingly even the work situations of technical and professional workers. The real problem is that the modern division of labor and the fragmented skill structure of the work force has been designed to preclude any effective understanding of the whole of an operation or process let alone that of a plant, office, or industry as a whole. And since contemporary workers do not understand the historical origins of their skills and work organizations, the present system appears to have always existed and to be a relatively rational and efficient way of organizing work. It is for this reason that the call for workers' control is often seen as the impractical dreams of university intellectuals. Given their limited skills and heavy reliance upon engineers and managers for guidance and direction, it is no wonder that alternative or more democratic methods for the management of production seem impractical or impossible. Many, but not all, automobile workers agree that the organization of work is oppressive, leaving the worker no autonomy or creativity, let alone control. Yet, they cannot envision any alternatives to the present system. Even in discussions of workers' control or associated forms of labor, they can't envision how it would concretely function nor can they envision any means of attaining such a goal. In discussions with some American auto workers I mentioned what has recently happened at the Triumph motorcycle factory in Coventry, England, where the workers locked out management for over a year in defiance of management's attempt to reorganize production along more rational and efficient lines. Following the lock-out the Labor Government intervened and allowed the workers to organize and run the factory as a workers' cooperative. The American auto workers were astonished that the English motorcycle workers would dare to lock management out and were extremely curious how they could possibly organize production as a cooperative without the supervision of management. Yet they were unable to envision a similar reorganization for their own plant.[6]

In this context, the real problem for the left is not the mere reiteration of "workers' control" as a political slogan, but the careful identification of the elements of class domination which have become embedded within the forces of production and the

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Telos 13 (Fall 1972), pp. 3-28, and André Gorz, "The Tyranny of the Factory," *Telos* 16 (Summer 1973), pp. 61-67. For more concrete observations, see David Brody, *Steelworkers in America: The Nonunion Era* (New York, 1969), Robert Lynd and Helen Lynd, *Middletown* (New York, 1929), Edward Shorter, ed., *Work and Community in the West* (New York, 1973), and Robert Blauner, *Alienation and Freedom* (Chicago, 1964). The Marxist interpretation of these processes has been recently developed by the Union for Radical Political Economy group. A recent discussion of their perspective is contained in Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, "Class Power and Alienated Labor," *Monthly Review*, 26:10 (March 1975), pp. 9-25, as well as the citations therein.

6. Part of the reason for this is cultural and not merely that their attitudes are mirror reflections of the objective relations of production. By cultural I mean the restricted language abilities and vocabulary which preclude the analytic and more abstract thinking necessary to envision alternatives. These cultural deficiencies reflect their historic class deprivation due, ultimately, to their subordinate position within the system of production. As Gramsci first pointed out, the working classes are exploited not only at work but by the very structure of society which bars people from access to the skills and knowledge necessary for it to organize society in their own interests and according to their own cultural standards. These kinds of problems have recently been taken up in Claus Müller's interesting book, *The Politics of Communication: A Study in the Political Sociology of Language, Socialization, and Legitimation* (New York, 1973).

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discussion of alternative technologies and methods of production which would overcome the separation of mental and manual labor and give back to workers the skills and knowledge necessary for self-management. The left can no longer assume that the socialization of the existing forces of production along with the more equitable distribution of goods will solve the problems of capitalism. The elements of domination embedded within technology and the production process must be carefully scrutinized and eliminated.

A problem of perhaps greater magnitude is that the commodification of labor is now only one aspect of social production as the commodity form has penetrated everyday life. Since the 1930s the necessity of capital accumulation has generated innumerable commodities for consumption within everyday life. Much of the post-war growth in America has been sustained through the production and marketing of suburban homes; two or more cars per family; radios, televisions, and stereos for private at-home leisure; various home and workshop appliances; a broad range of recreational goods from games to recreational vehicles; and a year-round program of spectator sports. Through this process of reification and commodity fetishism, personal and social relations among individuals are mediated through the principle of exchange. Similar in effect to the technological and organizational rationalization of work which parcelized and isolated skills and fucntions, the commodity penetration of everyday life destroys and fragments social interdependence and gives a thing-like appearance to cultural relations. Capital now reproduces itself not only on the level of labor, but in the sphere of culture through increasing commodity consumption. This renders labor only one of the moments or processes which reproduces the system and subsequently adds other moments which have equal if not greater importance in struggle and resistance. It is these processes which must be grasped if we are to understand the more limited role that the "revolt against work" now plays in the struggle against capital.

Marx anticipated this process of reification as the universal character of capitalist development in his analysis of the fetishism of the commodity whereby labor and its products are transformed into commodities through the market principle of exchange. The social relations of production take on the character of a relation between things which are objective and "outside" of the producing individuals. The structure of the capitalist market hides the social relations between producers such that the time invested by the worker is seen as equal to the value of the product. The impersonality of exchange obscures the fact that the production and distribution of commodities is a social process. Profits replace human values as products and machines take on a greater importance than human beings—the producers and consumers. Reification designates the process in which relations between people become transformed into relations between things. As a theory regarding the essence of capitalism, it denotes a social process concerning people's relation to each other and to the objects of their activity.

The significance of the theory of reification is that it designates the process which underpins the social reproduction of capital in both its production and consumption dimensions. Therefore, as Joachim Israel has argued: "The problem is no longer the individual's relation to his work, but his position within the basic process of production and exchange... The acceptance of this reasoning leads to several consequences. First, there is a change of emphasis from labor and working conditions to the analysis of the structure of the basic process of social production and the ways in which the

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social product is distributed, i.e., to commodity relations and market conditions. Second, it presupposes a change in the theory concerning human nature from a philosophical-anthropological to a sociological-normative theory. Third, there is a shift from problems of self-realization—individual and collective—to problems of the rational and conscious organization of social processes and social development. How can man direct and regulate the social forces he himself has created rather than being blindly subjugated to their influence and dominance?—this becomes the central problem."[7] While Marx grasped the process whereby all activities and products are transformed into commodities with exchange values, he didn't fully analyze the implications of this for total social reproduction, particularly in the areas of everyday life or culture, and its adverse impact on the development of class consciousness. The political significance of reification is that it has constituted a powerful force in the integration of the working class into bourgeois society and culture. It is the theory of reification and its political problematic which has characterized the important theoretical work of Lukács, the Frankfurt School, and contemporary Critical Theory.[8]

The process of reification, in both its labor and cultural (or production and consumption) dimensions, and its significance for integration can be readily grasped by considering the situation of the women of the phone company as reported by Elinor Langer.[9] Langer entered the phone company as an employee to seek an answer to the perennial question of the left: "Why didn't people move? What things, invisible to me, were holding them back?" The work as service representative at the phone company was as highly industrialized and bureaucratized as work is anywhere, but why were there no overt work revolts or even an interest in the communications union?

The service department of the phone company which Langer observed organizes the work process along Taylorist and Mayoist managerial work control strategies. The work is efficiently and "scientifically" organized with extreme specialization and elaborate control structures mediated with an ideology of "service," niceness, and friendship. Under constant pressure to "produce" the women have devised numerous "soldiering" tactics to relieve the burdens of their job. In covert ways they resist, but it never takes the form of overt resistance. The elaborate control apparatus of the company is one part of the explanation, but not sufficient in itself.

Consumption plays an important role in the lives and identities of these women: it provides the motivation to work, and no doubt the motivation to tolerate the dullness, pace, and authoritarian control characteristic of their jobs. The women are imbued with consumer ideologies and practices and mostly devote their free time on and off the job to the disucssion of the latest objects consumed as well as to the act of consumption itself. Their incomes, which are supplementary to that of their

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7. Joachim Israel, *Alienation: From Marx to Modern Sociology* (Boston, 1971), p. 266.

8. For representative works, see Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness* (London, 1971); Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York, 1972); Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (Boston, 1964); Bruce Brown, *Marx, Freud, and the Critique of Everyday Life: Toward a Permanent Cultural Revolution* (New York, 1973); and Stanley Aronowitz, *False Promises, op.cit.*

9. Elinor Langer, "The Women of the Telephone Company," New England Free Press reprint, originally published in *The New York Review of Books*, 14: 5 & 6 (March 12 and 26, 1970).

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husbands, allow them to purchase the household appliances necessary for an efficient, modern, and mechanized home; a second car; expensive clothes and wigs; and numerous personal consumer items. Langer interprets it thus: "What the pressures of food, shelter, education, or medical costs contribute to their need to work I cannot tell, but it seems to me the women are largely trapped by their love of objects. What they think they need in order to survive and what they endure in order to attain it is astonishing.... I think that the household appliances play a real role in the women's family lives: helping them to run their homes smoothly and in keeping with a (to them) necessary image of efficiency and elegance. As for the clothes and the wigs, I think they are a kind of tax, a tribute exacted by the social pressures of the work-place. For the preservation of their own egos against each other and against the system, they had to feel confident of their appearance on each and every day. Outside work they needed it too: to keep up, to keep their men, not to fall behind."[10]

Given the managerial control structures and ideologies and the women's consumerist orientation toward social life, it is no surprise that Langer found that the women completely identified with the companies' goals and the authoritarian organization of work. Whereas the company defines their positions as service representatives meeting public needs, in practice they operate as sales personnel for the innumerable commodites produced by Western Electric and "marketed" by AT&T. When Langer attempted to raise the conflict between manipulating needs through new gadgets and selling *and* the public's needs, the women responded in the following manner: "Instead of noticing that I was advocating a position of principle, my class thought that, because I was so poor myself (as measured by having only one black telephone) I just somehow couldn't grasp the concept of the 'well-telephoned home,' but that I would catch on when I became convinced that the goods and services in question were truly valuable and desirable.... Their basic belief in the legitimacy of the 'make a buck' system established in their minds a link between company revenue and their own paychecks. 'That's where your money comes from' was a common conclusion to these discussions."[11] Lack of control over their work lives is also tolerated because of the numerous opportunities to move up in the so-called management hierarchy. One of the phone company's strategies for thwarting a "worker" sense of identity is through the creation of innumerable low and middle level "supervisory" positions which allow some responsibility over the work behavior of small groups. While remaining workers in any objective sense, the women are encouraged and come to see themselves as part of management. For those still on the bottom, a promotion into low-level management is always a real possibility. While most of the women on the bottom dislike the pace of the work, the low pay, the observation control systems, time-clocks, and the like, promotions upwards—with their promise of greater consumer power and status— remain an important ideology or future expectancy which defuses much discontent with the actual conditions of the job.

The significance of this account is that it illustrates the equal importance of commodity consumption of social production and in the integration of individuals of this process. Since the women of the phone company define themselves by the objects of their consumption which are utilized both outside and inside the office, their

10. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 18 and 19.

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identities as workers are synthesized, and often muted, by their identities as consumers. This goes a long way in helping to explain why significant portions of the work force do not revolt and, perhaps, helps us to explain why actual work revolts often take the forms that they do in so far as they are mediated by other reifying processes, such as consumption of goods which enhance self-identities and offer spectacular and status-oriented life styles.

Another dimension to the theory of reification is the impact of the commodity form upon human culture itself in the context of everyday life outside of work-time. Traditionally, everyday life was a sphere independent of the economy where interdependent social bonds were formed for economic survival and the generation and enjoyment of popular culture. Under early industrial capitalism the commonality of being workers within a relatively homogeneous neighborhood were sources of cultural cohesion which were manifested in rich social lives in the community tavern, lodge, or home. The post-war pattern of development with consumption organized around homes, automobiles, and recreational products, destroyed much of the prevailing social cohesion and radically changed life-styles and values for ordinary Americans. The sociocultural consequence of capitalist development has been the fragmentation of interdependent social relations among individuals and groups. The most immediate cultural consequence of this development was the displacement of the community as a social context in favor of the immediate or nuclear family, and then, the fragmentation of the family itself in favor of individual life-styles. In short, there has occurred a historical transformation in which social relations and values organized around work and community roles are replaced by exchange values or the commodity as the principle of social cohesion.[12] This fragmentation of social interdependence has been paralled by an increase or concentration of political power among the ruling elite, particularly on the level of the state which itself provides much of the infrastructure for continued production and consumption of goods and services. What the new consumer culture provided or generated was *private* freedom. It is this new cultural development—private freedom mediated by the commodity—which must be understood if we are to explain the remarkable resilience of contemporary capitalist society.

The point is that much of the popular sources for political stability—that is, the legitimation of subordination at work and politics and its accompanying dissatisfactions—rests on the experience and promise of autonomy and freedom within private life.[13] Perhaps this has always been the case for working classes, but what is different in post-war America is the programmed nature of this freedom around the principle of exchange which has had a significant impact on human culture. Whereas traditional culture was generated within everyday life within broad social contexts,

12. An important source for the observation of these cultural processes is the American community study. The best studies in this regard include Robert Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown, op.cit.*, and *Middletown in Transition* (New York, 1937), John K. Morland, *Millways of Kent* (New Haven, 1958), John R. Seelay, et. al., *Crestwood Heights* (Toronto, 1956), and Herbert Gans, *The Levittowners* (New York, 1967). An excellent and overlooked analysis of the historical development of reifying processes in everyday life through the use of American community studies is Maurice R. Stein's *The Eclipse of Community* (New York, 1964).

13. A good discussion along these lines which, unfortunately, misses the importance of the commodity, is Richard Flacks, "Making History vs. Making Life," *Working Papers*, 2:2 (Summer, 1974), pp. 56-71.

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contemporary culture is more dictated both by the form and the content of the commodity within much more restricted social contexts. Initially, the television was for family consumption and reduced the necessity for communication among friends and relatives within the neighborhood. Television programming is increasingly geared to special tastes and needs such that conflicts often arise within the family as to what program is to be viewed. Often this problem induces the consumption of an additional television set to satisfy individual interests. This process parallels the marketing of second and third cars for the family because of perceived individual needs for independence and freedom outside of the family. Camping used to be a simple affair for the family, merely driving the car to a place and pitching a tent. Now special recreational vehicles, such as motor homes, are consumed for such purposes. Also, increasingly, the men (usually) bring along trail bikes to that they can do "their thing" independent of the family at the campsite.

It is not necessarily the case, however, that people are merely the objects of the production-consumption system of advanced capitalism. Certainly, the production of goods and the marketing strategies which induce consumption (such as upgrading) originate as decisions within the capitalist class, and ordinary people do consume (no doubt for a multitude of intentions) since no other alternative to social living exists. But while products are programmed and come to mediate cultural life-styles, it is not the case that this process of reification eliminates the subjectivity of the consumer. One consumes with specific needs and intentions in mind and the commodity is used—be it a home, car, or leisure good—in the achievement of these needs and intentions. In large part, individuals do achieve some feeling of freedom, independence, autonomy, or adventure with the acquisition of specific commodities and consciously exploit products for these ends. But herein lies the real significance of the commodity in everyday life. If subjectivity is denied at the work-place and in politics, individuals are able to constitute themselves as self-conscious actors through commodity acquisition and use. On the level of social totality, capitalism as a system requires this element of subjectivity among the working population in order to survive, and this goes a long way in explaining the resiliency of capitalism. On the level of subjective intentions and actions, consuming individuals are able to achieve a minimal amount of freedom and autonomy in order to sustain themselves as human beings with dignity other than that of being mere wage slaves.

The traditional left has assumed, as in Zerzan's case, that shop-floor conditions were sufficient in the development of resistance, struggle, and class consciousness. What this perspective overlooks was that, in the past, much struggle was possible because of the important mediation of everyday culture. The social cohesion and interdependence of social relations outside of commodity consumption and bourgeois socialization functioned as an important medium for the expression of both labor and social discontent. It was this aspect of culture which was transformed into private freedom with commodity consumption. What must be explored in our time are the limits to cultural reification as an integrating and legitimating force in American capitalism. It is necessary to understand the ways in which people are generating new bonds of cohesion of solidarity through consumption. I can offer here only some sketchy observations. The unreliability of many consumer goods, particularly automobiles, has generated consumer movements in many American cities. Another interesting recent development in the area of recreational commodity consumption is

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the increasing growth of clubs and social groups organized around particular commodities, such as recreational vehicles, motorcycle touring and racing, snowmobiles, camping, bicycling, and skiing. In 1970, for instance, it was reported that within a ten year period (since the introduction of the product in the early 1960s) there had arisen about 3,000 local snowmobile clubs, some with as many as 200 to 300 members. While most commodities are designed for private use, many users are creating new bonds of friendship with others who share similar interests in the recreational use of the commodity. These new cultural developments indicate a reversal of the traditionally understood process and pose limits to the fragmenting impact of commodities. The political implications of these new cultural developments is by no means clear, but they may provide new bonds of social interdependence necessary for effective resistance or struggle in the context of increasing crisis in American society.

The total social production of capital in the post-war period is generating new crises which are felt or experienced more directly in the area of everyday life than on the immediate shop floor. Post-war development was sustained in America through the development of a sophisticated war economy and the automobile industry. While it gave America its post-war prosperity, we are now faced with the disastrous consequences of this historical form of economic growth. Given the immense development of our modes of transportation, as well as other new technological innovations, this country now faces a crisis in ecology. The destruction of our ecological systems—land, water, air, and plant and animal systems—has gone hand in hand with the particular way in which capitalism has developed in America over the last 30 to 40 years.[14] Americans must now confront the contradictions of this development in their own immediate lives, a problem which they do not connect to the dissatisfactions they feel as workers. Another dimension to this is the energy crisis. Most of the post-war pattern of development was generated through the cheap cost of petroleum and electricity. As a result, the end of the era of fossil fuel consumption is rapidly approaching. While the recent gasoline shortage was surely fabricated to increase the profits and markets of the oil industries, it signalled the emergence of the international energy crisis. Most reports indicate that at current exponential rates of growth in the industrial West, our present petroleum reserves will be exhausted within 20 to 40 years. A major part of the explanation for the rapid depletion of petroleum is the particular way production and consumption has been organized. The strength and growth of the economy was built upon the industrial, transportation, and household consumption of petroleum—based energy, often in consciously-planned wasteful ways. Of great importance is the fact that this growth and waste was in large part subsidized by the enforced poverty of the third world.[15]

Ecologically, therefore, there are definite limits to the increased production and consumption of goods and resources, particularly automobiles, if we are to avoid the destruction of our natural environment (and the sustenance necessary for all living things) and the permanent exhaustion of non-renewable resources. The problems of overcongested and unlivable cities, air and water pollution, the high cost of fuel, not

14. This has been demonstrated by Barry Commoner, *The Closing Circle* (New York, 1972) and Barry Weisberg, *Beyond Repair: The Ecology of Capitalism* (Boston, 1971).

15. See Geoffrey Barraclough, "The Great World Crisis I," *New York Review of Books* (January 23, 1975).

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to mention the energy and food requirements of the poor countries, pose severe limits to the pursuit of freedom and independence within everyday life, particularly with regard to the ever-increasing consumption of consumer goods which play such an important role in our impending ecology and energy crises. Since contemporary production rests upon an infrastructure of socially-conditioned needs and culture, the crisis is also one of culture and life-styles developed in the post-war era. This means that the modern crisis will be experienced in the context of everyday life as a problem of culture and the decreasing possibilities for a livable existence within such a framework. This problem is already evident in the case of the automobile as it increasingly becomes more of a nuisance and an irrational form of transportation given the congested nature and over-built structure of the city, high and often prohibitive costs in purchase and maintenance, and the high costs and eventual disappearance of gasoline and oil.[16]

That the problem of reification, culture, and crisis are not even addressed by either Zerzan or Looman in their accounts of workers and work indicate the extent to which they are removed from the realities of contemporary capitalism and the real concerns of ordinary Americans. The left has traditionally focused its theoretical and organizing efforts on the shop-floor level—the exploitation and manipulation of wage labor. But what is foremost in the minds of most Americans is not the problem of work, but life and the decreasing possibilities of sustaining it under the ruthlessness of an insatiable profit- and power-oriented state capitalism which has lost its ability to rule society in a rational manner. Therefore, if and when social rebellion occurs in the United States, the need and critical consciousness for such a rebellion may well emerge outside of the workplace and its immediate problems. Its sources will be the growing contradictions of everyday life in one's attempts to physically survive the problems of ecology, the unlivability of the cities, the energy crisis, and perhaps the weariness of commodity saturation. A necessary condition of such a rebellion may be the new bonds of interdependence that have been forming in the everyday life of leisure activities. But this is not to underplay the importance of alienated labor. To the ordinary American the problems of work and life exist in autonomous spheres. Contemporary opposition movements, which increasingly originate in everyday life, must then ultimately confront the problem of work, understanding that the commodification and ultimate destruction of everyday life is both reflective of and determined by labor as commodity.

16. For an excellent account of this, see Emma Rothschild's *Paradise Lost: The Decline of the Auto-Industrial Age* (New York, 1973).

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REVIEWS:

Dominique Desanti, *Les Staliniens: une expérience politique, 1944-1956.* Paris: Fayard, 1975.

Les Staliniens is the most revealing book about the French Communist Party to appear in a long time. It is a rich tapestry of personal recollection and political history, approaching an historical totalization in Sartre's sense with the qualification that the author and the participant through whom we view the dialectic of Stalinism are one and the same. Unlike most books on Stalinism, this one avoids the opposite dangers of dogmatic glorification (e.g., Thorez' *Fils du peuple*) or bitter resentment (Lefebvre's *La Somme et le reste*). With a mixed attitude of pain, guilt, and nostalgia for lost fraternity, Desanti is able to capture Stalinism, both as a political force and a personal experience, with an unmatched depth and clarity.

Desanti's unique position as a journalist for Party newspapers (*Action, Démocratie Nouvelle, L'Humanité*) situated her as an observer of both the party's intellectual and cultural elite and the major political events of the period. She recounts for us the 1948 Peace Congress at which vulgar Zhdanovism was announced to the unbelieving ears of Picasso, Eluard, Haldane, Huxley, Lukács, and countless other European CP intellectuals. We see Lukács approving the condemnation of modernism with a joking skepticism while the British scientists walk out in rage. Ironically, Zhdanov died the next night and Faydiev, the underling who had just pronounced the attack on "bourgeois decadence," received the news with unextinguishable hysterical fear.

Desanti's narrative of political events—the Trials, the strikes, the shifts in Soviet strategy, the invasions—and her portraits of the Communist leaders—Thorez, Togliatti, Duclos, Gerö, Gomulka—are equally enthralling. The trial of Kostov in Sophia in 1949, which she reported, created a sensation when the accused amazingly denied his guilt as a Titoist traitor. A few years later when the ban from Moscow on Tito was lifted, she was filled with remorse and anxiety for having written a book attacking Tito which contributed in some degree to Kostov's unfortunate fate.

The relation of women to the Party is another area that Desanti forcefully and sensitively analyzes. There was simply no questioning in the Party of the social roles of men and women. Even when women had important Party posts, like Thorez' wife Jeanette Vermeersch, feminist issues were not broached. What is worse, the Party encouraged a cult of the family, an ideal of loyal subordination for the wife to the husband, a hypocrisy of fidelity and monogamous respectability. The underlying conservatism of Stalinism, its inability to grapple with the transformation of social relations in the twentieth century, is illustrated in its treatment of the women question.

Les Staliniens recaptures the experience of a whole generation of French intellectuals who had joined the Party during the Resistance and left it in the wake of the Hungarian invasion. The important question of the relation of intellectuals to the Communist Party and to revolutionary movements in general is illuminated profoundly in these pages. How could some of the finest critical minds of France remain steadfast, committed Communists for so long, given the brutal dogmatism, the strict authoritarianism, the duplicious policies and the barbarous actions of the CP? It is a troubling and difficult question, one that is particularly exigent now that the crisis is evoking the call, here in the United States, for the creation of another CP on the Leninist model. The supreme virtue of this book must be the light it sheds on this question and therefore on the whole range of issues that are summed up in the

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postulate of a dialectic of theory and practice. Is the harsh alternative for intellectuals one of isolated but "free" impotence or participation in radical organizations only at the cost of critical intelligence? The answer of the New Left in the 1960s—an answer that failed, let us remember—was the creation of non-Leninist democratic associations and the outright rejection of CP experience.

In *Les Staliniens* we rediscover all the mistakes of dogmatic Marxism, but we also see its powerful attractions, its satisfying illusions and even its positive strengths. Intellectuals of the left can no longer afford to ignore the mixed nature of Stalinism. In the fraternal days of the Resistance the Nazi enemy was proximate, well-defined and dangerous, hierarchy in the Party was minimal but orders were eagerly and unquestioningly accepted. In this situation, there was little conflict for the Party intellectual. However, with the establishment of Stalinism in the French Party after the Resistance, with the Cold War working as a cover for Stalin's dictates, and with no socialist alternative to Stalinism yet emerging, the situation for the intellectual became laden with conflicts. Yet Desanti, her theoretician husband, Morin Lefebvre and all the others continued to believe, to obey and to act. How is this possible?

Desanti makes clear the importance of the Party, however authoritarian, as a genuine worker-intellectual sub-culture. Regardless of the narrowness of the bureaucracy, there was space in the Party for solidarity with others in a common cause, for mutual recognition in a desired goal both among workers and among intellectuals. As J.T. Desanti says in an appendix, the intellectual had, in the bosom of the Party, both a community of peers and a following, a large one, that acted in the world on his ideas, however indirectly. There was effective power and there was recognition, two qualities deeply needed by everyone, but especially lacking to intellectuals in the context of capitalism. Outside the Party one found only anomie, careerism and cooptation. French intellectuals made a trade-off of their independence for community. For the price paid by them for the satisfaction of these basic needs was an acceptance of authority within the Party along with a masochistic self-condemnation for being petty bourgeois, not proletarian. We must note that the habitual analogy of the CP with the Church masks the distinctive features of the former. The Party was dogmatic and authoritarian, demanding faith before reason, obedience before freedom, but it provided intellectuals with a secular community and a secular identity in which to think and act.

Desanti sees the period 1944 to 1956 as one of "monolithic" Communism, which has been replaced by polycentrism but also by integration, for the French CP, with bourgeois democracy. The CP is now a Party like the others, eschewing revolution and advocating civil liberties. For Desanti there has been a loss as well as a gain. Within Stalin's demand for collaboration with the bourgeois governments, the CP, until 1956, was still an antagonistic, negative force within capitalism and the militants could think of themselves as truly struggling for the victory of socialism. If the "bureaucratic deformations" of Stalin are to some extent gone in the French CP (it did criticize the Soviets for the '68 invasion of Czechoslovakia), so is the militancy, so is the revolution. Hence Desanti's book allows American leftists to see the Stalinist experience in France with more complexity, more truth, more truly critical questions. It forces us to reexamine our assumptions about an easy and total integration of theory and praxis, about an all-at-once apocalypse of socialism, about the immediate creation of democratic revolutionary forms. Surely the book does not lead one to conclude that

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Leninist forms are desirable or necessary. But it raises uncomfortable questions about the relation of an intellectual to a mass organization, pointing out how easy it is for the intellectuals to yield themselves to political authority and how much they are willing to forego to participate in a radical community.

Although *Les Staliniens* does not offer social and economic analysis, it is very accurate political history. Since leaving the Party, Desanti has written an intellectual history of the utopian socialists and is working on a study of the origins of the Cold War. She has also written novels and her literary skills emerge in this book. The book's *leitmotiv* is the drama of the progressive disintegration of the author's belief in Stalinism. In the context of the political thaw in world diplomacy we witness the crumbling of the glacial solidity of a person's world view. This personal level makes for a complexity and ambiguity in the narrative that enhances the reader's interest.

Mark Poster

David Carr, *Phenomenology and the Problem of History*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974. xxvi plus 283 pages.

The growing discussion of phenomenology's relevance for political and social thought must inevitably come to grips with the problem of history. David Carr's recent work can ultimately be considered as a continuation of the effort begun by Husserl in the *Crisis of the European Sciences* to span the chasm between philosophy and the world of experience. Given the schematic nature of Husserl's later works, his account of history here certainly requires elucidation and development before it can be judged useful. While Carr provides a good account of the genesis and problems of Husserl's approach to history, the final positive evaluation rests not on the potential importance of Husserl's thinking, but on the picayune point that it is philosophically impossible to refute Husserl's alleged "partial historicism." Thus, Carr's work remains tied to that very same philosophical and pedantic thinking from which Husserl sought to escape in the *Crisis*. As such, Carr fails to give phenomenology its due. To understand where he goes wrong, it is necessary to briefly outline the development in Husserl's phenomenology up to the *Crisis*.

Initially, Husserl conceived of phenomenology as the attempt to arrive at that element of subjectivity which is universal, i.e., transcending historically and culturally specific determinations. The phenomenological reduction thus sought to reach the invariant structures of consciousness which would promise to be the foundation of all sciences. Taken for granted in Husserl's initial undertakings, however, was the idea that we need not look beyond the individual's own experiences in order to reconstruct the stages in the development of an object's manner of givenness—and thence, its meaning. One of Husserl's earliest and most lucid accounts of the phenomenological reduction is to be found in *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness*, where it is used to reveal the dynamics of subjectivity at work in the very experience of the passing of time. Yet, while this work shows the usefulness of the reduction in arriving at the formal structure of consciousness—through an inherently dialectical, ever-changing process of selective retention and intentional projection—it also reveals

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its limitations. Ultimately, it can provide no insight into the meaningful content of our experience. This can come, as Husserl begins to realize in *Cartesian Meditations,* only by an approach which considers intersubjectivity as the ground of all meaning. Finally, beginning with *Experience and Judgment* and culminating in the *Crisis*, Husserl develops the crucial point that intersubjectivity is itself historically manifested and cannot be understood or approached without taking its history into account.

Thus, by the time of the *Crisis*, Husserl had become aware that it is never really possible to consider the individual's mode of experiencing apart from the social and historical context in which it is located. The very manner of givenness of an object is not to be discovered and explained solely by reference to the experiencing subject. Ultimately, this can only be understood as the historically sedimented product of what Husserl called "anonymously functioning subjectivity" responding to the needs of a world which has always—so far as human history is concerned—been shaped by preceding generations and which each subsequent generation has tried in its turn to reshape in accordance with its goals—themselves embodied in and guiding historical projects.

Notwithstanding his dutiful explication of Husserl's texts, Carr does not understand Husserl's intention in the *Crisis*. He fails to recognize the shortcomings of the earlier works that Husserl himself came to acknowledge in his later works. Instead, Carr sees the *Crisis* as the effort to merely round out Husserl's earlier phenomenology by extending it to history, and not as the attempt to refocus and redefine the very starting point of his philosophy.

This narrow view of the *Crisis* poses problems for Carr's interpretation of what might be considered the most crucial notion introduced in the *Crisis*: the life-world. For Husserl, this encompasses more than just the categorically unmediated element always present in experience. The life-world also includes the products of historically sedimented subjectivity. As such, the life-world is not to be viewed as neutral stuff into which we whimsically inject meaning as pure subjects: on the contrary, it is given to us already laden with implied meanings and a pregiven, unquestioned validity—what Husserl terms "meaning- and validity-implications." Thus, by means of the life-world, we are in direct contact with the sedimented subjectivity—and thus the history—of preceding generations. The danger always exists, however, that what is actually the product of human subjectivity—the particular modes in which things seem to be "given" and the values and goals they imply—is seen as a "second nature," not susceptible to re-evaluation and criticism in light of our present wants and needs. A large part of the *Crisis* is devoted to describing and criticizing this form of naturalism: indeed, Husserl defined the crisis of the sciences—and, moreover, the crisis of humanity as a whole—as this inability to recognize the *human* origins of those very scientific standards against which man now judges himself.

Carr's failure stems from his insistence upon the separation between the life-world on the one hand—seen as historically and culturally specific—and, on the other, that reality given through the objective, eternal "truths" of science. As such, science can no longer be considered in Carr's framework to be "in crisis" or otherwise problematical. The intrusions of science into our life-world, that Husserl takes pains to point out, are difficult for Carr to understand. Carr finally resolves the problem by conceding that we do come to accept scientific truths as determining a part of our everyday behavior. For example, "I do not allow the temperature in my freezer to rise above 32° F

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because I know that if I do the ice in it will melt" (p. 210). Yet, Carr is still hesitant to acknowledge that this belief in the melting point of ice in any way determines or influences our perception of the world. Thus, Carr effectively reduces science to its most commonly-known "truths," while that very attitude epitomized by science, and shown by Husserl to be the source lying behind the crisis of existence, is seen as obtaining only in the scientist *qua* scientist, and not extending to laymen at all (p. 211). Thus, Carr does not deal with the *content* of Husserl's reconstruction of history—i.e., the genesis of the present crisis of civilization—in favor of a discussion of form alone.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Carr ultimately views Husserl's philosophy of history as tending toward historicism. In the *Crisis*, intersubjectivity is established as extending through time in the life-world by Husserl's tracing out the strands of continuity in western civilization: the theoretical attitude, the very project of civilization itself (the *telos* of western civilization), and, since Galilean science, the prevalence of the alienated, "scientific" natural attitude. Yet, owing to Carr's inability to understand science's influence on the ways in which we experience the world, his failure to consider the cultural and historical underpinnings of science, etc., he wrongly imputes to Husserl a "partial historicism," implying a multitude of disjointed, culturally specific life-worlds to which our access is forever denied. Carr's defense of poor Husserl at this point rests merely on the observation that a "partial" historicism which does not deny the possibility of absolute knowledge simply cannot be refuted.

Ultimately, this account of Husserl's philosophy is totally unconvincing for those who would seek to make phenomenology socially and politically relevant. Carr fails altogether to demonstrate that phenomenology can—or should—be understood as anything other than another garden variety of transcendental philosophy. Indeed, if his book demonstrates anything at all, it is the impossibility of approaching Husserl's work meaningfully from that analytic frame of reference which separates "ways of thinking about experience" from "ways of experiencing," which separates "science" from "culture" and "history," and which would ultimately separate the sphere of transcendental truths from that of the historically contingent.

Patricia Tummons

George Psathas, ed., *Phenomenological Sociology: Issues and Applications*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973. $9.00.

U.S. cultural institutions are subject to comparison with the world of fashion and, true to the rule, sociology continues to contribute to the maintenance of institutionalized fads. Although phenomenology has held a small but real beachhead in U.S. philosophy since the late thirties-early forties, it was not until very recently that one could speak about phenomenology above a whisper in sociological quarters. True, early efforts were made by Berger, Goffman, Garfinkel and a few others. Yet, the old gods held sway. Only recently has a new consumer market developed. There have been traditional minority appeals from "Chicago School" descendents, but more recently

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cries for new garments to replace the outmoded sociological scientism in its myriad variations have been voiced.

Over the years there has been a growing awareness that "objective" sociology misses certain crucial dimensions of social existence. It is precisely because phenomenology seeks to provide a subjective foundation for objective phenomena that it turns out to be almost the ideal candidate for both a systematic critique as well as a general reconstruction of social science. Thus, a new generation of consumer-producers appeared on the scene requesting space for a new kind of sociological enterprise. In August, 1971, the American Sociological Association was prevailed upon to allow Psathas and a few others to show off a new line of apparel: the first ASA session on phenomenological sociology.

This was the beginning of a new era. As with all new 'models,' initial efforts are problematic and, genetic fallacy or not, the conditions out of which the "phenomena" arise unambiguously structure their "essence." Thus, *Phenomenological Sociology* is billed as an advanced introduction to phenomenological social science (sociology in particular) for the "reader who is not well versed and relatively unsophisticated in phenomenology. . ." (p. 1). This is a difficult task which, I think, fails. The problems with the book reflect the state of a relatively new and untried endeavor, and are indicative of the current status of phenomenology and sociology. Beginning with a very thin, broad overview touching all bases from intellectual genealogy (Weber, symbolic interaction, etc.), to problems of the everyday world (what it is, assumptions, methods, etc.), to subjectivity, to phenomenology as a new paradigm, the book turns out to be an uneven collection of reflections, programmatic statements, conceptual analyses and descriptive reports, closing with a curious exposition of that "orphan," phenomenological Marxism – curious because the author concludes with the comment that this is all very interesting but of dubious merit.

In "Solitude and Sociality," Zaner outlines "the crisis of western man:" the unfulfilled promise of western rationalism and the need to establish new foundations for the reconstitution of knowledge. As for social science, he considers Gouldner's call for a "reflexive sociology" and concludes that it falls short of the goal in not recognizing the radical nature of a true reflexivity. Critical recognition and criticism of values cannot be "*at the same level* as the values criticized" (p. 30). Zaner argues that a radical approach must focus on the roots, i.e., the philosophical presuppositions, of social science. What is needed is radical criticism understood as the fundamental discipline of knowledge grounded by Husserl on autonomous foundations (as opposed to traditional ones). This "wanting-to-know" is an admission of "not-knowing" which leads to communication (or a dia-logos) with self or others. The phenomenologist engages in elucidating basic assumptions or presuppositions: that *there is* a world, and that it *is* social. Here phenomenological investigations can take two directions: structural or static phenomenology – the archaeology of the structures of the pre-given world; and genetic or constitutive phenomenology – the study of modification and change.

Thus, Zaner appeals to sociologists to try to understand the social world as it is for others and to see phenomenology not as a slip into subjectivism or relativism, but as *the proper constitution of objectivity*. Yet, the whole notion of the crisis remains vague and it is not surprising to find Kurt Wolff asking for clarifications: is it confined to science? Or does it include culture, society, art, economics and religion? Here the mere

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suspension of received notions like subject-object distinctions is insufficient. What is needed is a more radical openness—what he calls "surrender"—in order to avoid superimposing pre-conceived views and categories everywhere. We must focus on the suspension of received notions. Thus, philosophical radicalism must recognize the inescapability of political responsibility and responsiveness, while political radicalism must recognize human beings as such, in order to understand them and treat them as ends. The political discussion enters the "scientific" enterprise with the recognition of the partiality and one-sidedness of the viewpoint constituting "objectivity." Thus, the introjection of "objective" social science on other cultures is, first and foremost, a political act of imperialism to be subjected to close scrutiny. In a similar vein, Helmut Wagner offers an expanded programmatic statement for phenomenological investigation. Recycling Schutz's concepts of subjective understanding, typification and biography, along with Berger's and Luckmann's structural phenomenology, he wants to extend this work into the realm of *Weltanschauung*. This would involve focusing on the individual, his biographical development, and what he calls dynamic social being. The problem with Wagner, however, is that he never quite manages to deal with the issues within a meaningful political-valuative context.

Likewise, John O'Neill seeks to avoid traditional intellectual biases by shifting from formal analyses to a comprehension of the social world on the basis of commonsense knowledge. In doing so, he shows the compatibility of Simmel's categories with phenomenological investigations of the intersubjective constitution of everyday life.

For Simmel, the first *a priori* is the basis of my relation to the other, i.e., the clarification of the relation as "an examplar of the same social system" (p. 94). What is at issue here is the concept of typification and the fundamental role it plays in intersubjective relations. It is through the interplay of the social self and the generalized other that people come to learn about the world, others and themselves, while constituting the everyday world. The second *a priori* involves social involvement (or commitment and withdrawal), i.e., Goffman's presentation of self. These two *a priories*—"knowledge, truth and falsehood in human relations" (Simmel)—imply that interaction is predicated on knowledge typifications. Thus, self-respect and considerateness form the foundational rules for interaction. Consequently, some sense of trust is primary: "seduction precedes both deduction and induction as the basis of our experience with others" (p. 99).

The third *a priori*, symbiosis, involves the ambiguous relation of man to society: our alternating experience of the social world as a force, an external determinant, and the ground of our freedom. At the same time, however, it is also a source of anonymity and alienation. This metaphysics of everyday life, however, does not entail a choice between philosophy and sociology. Rather, the reflexive nature of social reality necessitates both. Naturally, this type of sociological groundwork is likely to raise the question of "objectivity," which is precisely the theme of the next article by Egon Bittner.

In "Objectivity and Realism in Sociology," Bittner criticizes traditional positivism (naive realism) for its inability to account for certain aspects of the social world and examines what he calls the resurgence of realism under the auspices of participant observation and phenomenology. These two approaches, specified as fieldwork, are geared to obtaining the view of the actor which entails immersion in the world of the other, including the emotive dimensions. To do this, however, is to open problems

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such as the ambiguity of accuracy, uncritical attitudes, etc. Although we have to focus on *the* reality, this *is* someone else's reality and the observer can never appropriate it as his (or her) own. The basic problem here lies in the attempt to turn the world of others into our own. It is the observer's contrivance that belies assumptions of superiority (or objectivity, realism, etc.). Such obstacles may result in abortive phenomenology. The observer risks substituting unanalyzed impressions for careful analysis and, by focusing on subjectivity, ends up misinterpreting its proper realm, with phenomenology thus "taking the form of a pallid ideology of cultural relativism [which] attenuates the natural bonds of human community" (p. 123).

Notwithstanding his attempt to provide a critical notion of "objectivity," by failing to properly thematize the phenomenological notions of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, Bittner ends up with a very dubious predicament which collapses precisely on the notion of objectivity that he sought to criticize. In this respect, Spiegelberg's analysis in the next article is much more convincing.

In one of the most provocative and concrete essays in the collection, Herbert Spiegelberg analyses the "we" relation. This reintroduces the old problem of intersubjectivity. After a preliminary discussion of ordinary uses of "we," he develops a structural analysis of the phenomenon as *meant* and as *given*.

The study of a phenomenon as *meant* (not given) is to be dealt with by phenomenological ontology. There is a pre-stage to the we-phenomenon which is the I-you realm. Initially, the constitution of a we-relation involves closing social distance, and the recognition of a mutual overlapping of social worlds—an intrinsic adoption of each other's stance based on a reciprocal trust. As *given*, on the other hand, the we-phenomenon is to be dealt with by a phenomenology of appearances. The question here is whether the we-phenomenon (as *meant*) is actually ever attained. The answer resides in the composite experience and communication of the members.

What this means for other phenomenological theories is that, while not refuting the views of Scheler, Schutz and Binswanger on the priority of the I or we, it suggests that their claim of "we" priority is suspect. Thus, there must be a reconsideration of the I-you phenomenon as the possible foundation of the we-phenomenon. For the social sciences this implies the study of perspectives. Spiegelberg's purely conceptual analysis, although refreshing in its warning against totalitarian suppression of the individual within an arbitrary "we," does not pay sufficient attention to the onto-genetic character of intersubjectivity—and ultimately ends up regressing from the mature to the younger and less complex Husserl.

The same theme is further elaborated by Psathas and Waksler in their attempt to extend Schutz's analysis of face-to-face interaction. Claiming that Schutz was unclear about whether social interaction occurs only if the two partners mutually affect each other, the authors want to distinguish between conditions necessary to begin and continue the we-relations. In this respect, Goffman's account does not go far enough in that it fails to differentiate between the characteristics of those engaged in interaction, the contents of their consciousness, and the attributions each must make to the other.

Thus, the problem revolves around what an observer must know in order to interpret the behavior of two actors as face-to-face interaction. What results is a detailed list of the essential features of face-to-face interaction. Although this interaction can occur with or without language, some sign system to convey meaning is

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necessary—socialized human beings must be spatially and temporally present and aware of each other—and finally, the individuals involved need not be *literally* face-to-face, since the notion of face-to-face is a metaphor and not a literal description of a necessary conditions. Unfortunately, all of this is rather trivial and adds very little to the stock of commonsense notions. If phenomenology is to provide anything new here, it will have to do more than Psathas and Waksler provide and deal with structures of domination, the Hegelian dialectic of recognition, and the explosive political implications contained therein.

Appended as an afterthought, probably solely to provide "bulk," is Blumenstiel's "The Sociology of Good Times." According to Blumenstiel, traditional western dichotomous thought is being replaced by a relativistic variant which is not only inferior to, but is based on dichotomous thinking. He consequently tries to re-establish the credibility of dichotomous thinking. Profoundly enough, this article offers an analysis of good times as being what people talk about as good times (zoos, parks, movies and courtship, etc.). Blumenstiel defines phenomenology as "the trick of making things whose meanings seem clear meaningless and then discovering what they mean" (p. 189). Thus, courtship involves gaming, playing the game, and a logic of losing. The point of all this trivia, he says, is allegedly that contemporary sociology focuses primarily on pathos (the thesis). He is promoting the sociology of good times (the antithesis). Unfortunately, the rabbit fails to crawl out of the hat and he has to close, confessing that he has no idea whatsoever concerning a possible synthesis.

In a somewhat more relevant vein, Jehenson applies some Schutzean conceptions to the study of organization. According to Jehenson, almost all studies of organizations are concerned with behavior and not the way in which members interpret the organizational "world." He wants to study the typifications and the cognitive pre-structurations of the world of members of organizations. This includes two sources, the official organizational system (formal and informal rules of process and interaction) and the individual's stock of knowledge at hand. Such an analysis must begin with a phenomenological discussion of the natural attitude. How does it apply to organizations such as, e.g., a psychiatric hospital? Here, the basic organizational or bureaucratic norm is one of impersonality. Actual bureacratic relations, however, have a second and more basic source for their impersonality: formally organized and functionally specific roles requiring only partial involvement. Consequently, this particular organization ends up being based on "they-relations" and collective stocks of knowledge for such typifications ("psychiatrists," "nurses," "social workers," etc.), with the result that social relations are typically unauthentic and anonymous. Elaborating on the results of his study of a hospital, Jehenson shows how the primary construction of the everyday world there consisted in *psychiatric typifications* or, more specifically, diagnostic interpretations. He concludes that in that particular organization, the psychiatric typification was a mode of adaptation amidst bureaucratic demands of impersonality.

Schutzean social scientists have usually understood typifications as existential (operating in everyday life) and constructed types (utilized by scientists). What the hospital study demonstrates, however, is an instance of second order constructions reverting and becoming routinized in a context where existential or primary constructions normally prevail. Thus, the distinctions cannot be strictly maintained. But if second order constructions can become routinized and substituted for everyday,

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primary (existential) constructions, what does this imply for organizations staffed by professionals? Here the Marxist theory of reification whereby relations among "roles" substitute for relations among people becomes very relevant and points to serious political implications.

In the next essay, Peter Manning and Horacio Fabrega, Jr., seek to develop a framework to account for both the medical (the body) and the socio-cultural (the self) approaches to the organization of behavior *vis-à-vis* illness. They see social science in need of more sophisticated references to bodily activity and states. Although the body is universal (everyone has one), the conventional focus is on persons as disembodied selves leaving social science with nothing but common sense conceptions of the body and one grand assumption: the body is experienced by everyone in the same manner.

In order to ascertain whether such is the case, they report their study of the people of San Cristobal de las Casas in Chiapas, conducted through interviews with families, curers (including MD's) and knowledgeable informants in local areas. They focused on how the sick role was manifested and what kind of help was sought. This included studies of the three health systems: *Mayan* (traditional Indian cures), *Western* (standard medical practice as found there), and *Mestizo* (a combination of the two). Moreover, they looked at the three correlative causes of illness: the Mayan, based on beliefs in sin and abdication of moral responsibility where self-body concepts are rather continuous with social interaction; the Mestizo, based on moral and social causation with different levels of body-self concepts and activity somewhat tied to social events, and Western, based on the isolated body and the medico-scientific theory of causation. Categorized under types of personal and impersonal systems, the authors provide a list of conceptualized experiences of self and body, health and illness, the character of the health care systems, curer-client relationships, and the tools, symbols and settings of curings. Thus, with a notion of the body as a sacred entity, body and self are not "logically distinguishable" but form a continuum; whereas where the body is seen as a machine, body and self are dealt with as "distinct entities, both logically and socially." Similarly, the curer-client relationship is in the first case "informal, diffuse, and noncontractual," whereas in the second it is "highly patterned and based on formal, almost contractual role prescriptions."

Curiously enough, the authors seem to suffer from social amnesia: although they claim their orientation to be an extension of the "philosophic-sociological phenomenology" of Alfred Schutz, they criticize phenomenological sociology for not having provided an adequate concept of the body (p. 254) and for neglecting the systematic study of the phenomenological experience of the body (p. 255). Nowhere do they mention Zaner's *The Problem of Embodiment* or Merleau-Ponty's extensive and excellent work on the subject.

The final article is an extensive historical exegesis of various authors who have been influenced by phenomenology. Usually, these authors have also been heavily influenced by Marxism and some aspects of Hegel's thought. Thus, Dallmayr considers the problem of the proposed merger of Marxism and phenomenology, and sees Paci's work *The Functions of the Sciences and the Meaning of Man*, as a cornerstone in the historical interplay of these two trends. This problematic, of course, goes back to the writings of the young Lukács, the modified interests of some of his students in Eastern Europe (Petrović and Kosik), the French "synthesizers" Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Tran Duc Thao, and finally, the flirtations of the early Marcuse. Paci here

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is the culmination of this trend which Dallmayr applauds, but at the same time sees as mired in a vague idealism along with ambiguities over a critical versus an apodictic stance. More recent attempts at this convergence are to be found in the writings of Piccone and O'Neill. Regarding Piccone, Dallmayr interprets his writing as faithful to Paci and caught in a similar dilemma over an apodictic versus a critical stance. Moreover, if Piccone is correct that knowledge and science are class-based, then he is caught in a relativist circle and knowledge becomes weaponry and apologetics—something Piccone claims to deplore. What Dallmayr fails to take into account is precisely Piccone's Husserlian emphasis on the *telos* which seeks to ultimately reconcile the universal and the particular. The universal independently of the particular is a meaningless abstraction as much as the particular devoid of the universal. Thus, the *concrete universal* for Piccone will necessarily have to be class-grounded. As for O'Neill, in spite of Dallmayr's appreciation for his views on intersubjectivity and concern for the moral integrity of man, he criticizes him for his sometimes vague appeals for standards of conduct (contemplative and-or interpersonal). Furthermore, O'Neill's appeal to common sense opinion risks floundering the pursuit of knowledge in the sargasso sea of historical contingency. Yet, where else is it to be found?

This is how phenomenological sociology has made its debut. What role this book will play in creating interest, educating, etc., remains an open question. The major problem is that too many of the articles are simplistic and distortive. Maurice Natanson has written how, after spending several years trying to understand Husserl, he is perplexed by people who claim to understand Husserl thoroughly after only brief, cursory study. The same can be said of many of these articles claiming to be "phenomenological sociology."

David Pugh

Eike Hennig, *Thesen zur deutschen Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte 1933 bis 1938*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Alfred Sohn-Rethel, *Oekonomie und Klassenstruktur des deutschen Faschismus*. Ed. J. Agnoli, B. Blanke, and N. Kadritzke. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Most literature on the political economy of the Third Reich, including that of the left, falls into one of two categories: empirical studies lacking a developed theoretical perspective or theoretical models making little or no use of historical evidence. To an extent two of the most recent additions to the left literature, Alfred Sohn-Rethel's *Oekonomie und Klassenstruktur des deutschen Faschismus* and Eike Hennig's *Thesen zur deutschen Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichge 1933 bis 1938*, have not escaped from this situation, but at least they have set higher goals.

Sohn-Rethel's book is a collection of essays written before and during World War II and based on his personal knowledge of the situation, gathered from his several semi-official positions in Berlin until 1936. To support his central theme, that there was a

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replacement of the economy based on relative surplus value by one based on absolute surplus value, he uses many historical examples, including the features of capitalist development in the twentieth century (e.g., rationalization and 'separation of ownership and control'), the various interest groups within business and agriculture, and the international political situation. Unfortunately, he has not been able to incorporate any of the more comprehensive statistical information developed since the war.

The features of German history since WWI made German industry particularly vulnerable during the depression. It was faced with two possible solutions: the acquisition of more markets or the lowering of costs. Neither option could be fulfilled as long as the business groups shared state power with the representatives of the working class; the crisis demanded a coalition with the other mass party, the National Socialists. The goals were a lowering of costs through a repression of the workers and an expansion of production, not for the public market, but for the state. "Fascism, at least German fascism, is...broken capitalism, simply the ruptured form of capitalism. It develops at the weakest link in the chain of world capitalism..." (p. 134). The most influential groups within industry had no alternative but to accept Hitler and make the most favorable compromises possible, even when it meant that the Nazis would sit "in the saddle on the back of the bourgeoisie and ride its own way" (p. 97).

These compromises were essentially different from industry's earlier ones with the Social Democrats: "But the relation of the bourgeoisie to this new mass basis is a basically different one than to the earlier..." because the SPD was merely an opposed element within the same economic system (p. 97). In contrast, the Nazis had no permanent basis in the economic system; their support among both the general population and the Harzburg front increased with the crisis.

The author seems to subscribe to a 'Bonapartist' theory of the relative autonomy of political power, although that name does not appear in the text. And though he occasionally seems to agree with a 'primacy of politics' view, his fundamental position is that there was not a dominance of one or another group over the others, but a dialectical relationship among them: "Both parts are chained to one another according to a type of opposed dependency relationship. They do not remain together because they like each other, but despite their hatred of one another... Their internal relationship is composed of a series of crises in which one intrigues and rebels against the other...to again have the experience...that it cannot rid itself of the other part" (p. 198).

The idea of a dialectical relationship as constituting Bonapartism seems to be legitimate, just as capitalism is also a dialectical relationship. The question is over which groups or classes constitute the moments of the dialectic. Engels' description of Bonapartism was that it is the true religion of the modern bourgeoisie. "I gradually understood more and more clearly that the bourgeoisie does not have it in itself to rule directly on its own and that unless an oligarchy, as here in England, ...can accept the task of leading the state and society in the interest of the bourgeoisie, a Bonapartist semi-dictatorship is the normal form. It takes over the major material interests of the bourgeoisie, even acting against the bourgeoisie, but allows them no part in the actual process of government." Bonapartism is therefore one further division of labor among an elite, to allow a capitalist society to reproduce itself more efficiently.

This description is not the one that appears in the historical descriptions in Sohn-

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Rethel's book, as demonstrated by his stress on the unreproductive nature of the Nazi conjuncture (p. 98). Perhaps this different understanding of "dialectics" is the reason he does not use the word Bonapartism to describe the Nazis. Yet, his description of the unreproductive nature of the economy goes so far that it almost calls into question the use of "dialectical" to describe it: "The fascist party is obviously not anti-capitalist. It lives, on the contrary, off of capitalism, but in the condition of the crisis to its existence. Only when the bourgeois society is economically sick does the Nazi Party thrive and vice versa" (p. 192). In other words, it was not in the interest of the Nazis to attempt to solve the capitalist's economic problems. This view has enormous implications for judging the Nazi economic policies which Sohn-Rethel does not pursue.

The second book, by Hennig, is largely a review of the existing studies on National Socialism, showing how we still lack theoretically-guided scientific monographs and comprehensive empirical studies. In the historical sections of the book he describes the repression of the workers and the accomodations between Party and industry. Because of the "significance of the large (war-important) industries" (p. 129), the accomodation between "the short-term interests of industry and the basic considerations of the fascist oligarchy intent on war" (p. 135), took the form of a structural bias in favor of large industry.

Hennig hesitates to call this a form of Bonapartism, because there was no political equality of the various classes toward the state. The destruction of the workers' movement was a political measure to extort more from the workers, or to go from appropriation based on a relative surplus value to one based on absolute surplus value. This fact, which is "important if not decisive," leads to the judgment that "the German fascism is to be conceived in this sense as a politically mediated exception in capitalism" (p. 102). Therefore, the bias in favor of large industry is not compelling enough to establish a "typical (monopoly-) capitalist character for National Socialism. This is even more true when one relates the concept of capitalism to the structure of the entire society" (pp. 102-103). Finally, the author again hedges these conclusions with another statement that more "detailed, theoretically supervised empirical analyses" are required (p. 102).

This book's legitimate criticisms of others and the demands for better studies create high expectations; if one tries to apply the high standards demanded by the author to his own book, one must be disappointed. The author has certainly discussed a large portion of the literature on the Third Reich, but precisely his attachment to them leads him into the same mistakes. This is especially true with regard to the various statistical tables and charts the author uses to support his position. A good example is the discussion of corporate profits.

Profits are discussed as a key indicator of the extent to which industry obtained positive benefits from Nazi political rule. Hennig relied on the data published by various authors (Schweitzer, Bettelheim, Swatek, Sweezy). Unfortunately, his major source, Arthur Schweitzer's table of profits from 1932 to 1936 (in *Big Business in the Third Reich*, p. 398), leads Hennig to commit the same mistake that he himself warned against ten pages earlier: they do not provide nearly an adequate statistical view of the irregular productivity of the economy during those years. To base one's statistical evidence on data from the depression years of 1932 or 1933 is to argue from "National Socialist—either consciously or unconsciously pro-Nazi—statistics..." (p. 84). His criticism of Schoenbaum (*Hitler's Social Revolution*), that he "argues on

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the level of National Socialist statistics, that all begin with 1932 as the base year," must be applied to Hennig himself (p. 86). This is all the more true because of the ready availability of data on profits throughout the 1920s and 1930s in the journal *Wirtschaft und Statistik* and collected in Hoffmann and Müller, *Das deutsche Volkseinkommen*.

The statistics given by Hennig show that profits increased dramatically from 1932 to 1936; this is hardly surprising in any non-socialist economy that goes from the bottom of a depression to full employment and production. But why stop with 1936? Gross profits continued to rise: they doubled between 1936 and 1939. It seems strange to present the increased profits of 1936 as indicating how much capital benefited from Nazi rule, when the following years showed an even more astounding increase of profits. Why are not these huge increases an even stronger indicator of the benefits and influence of the capitalists? It seems possible that the level of profits in itself is not an accurate indicator of the positive benefits gained by the capitalists under Nazi political rule.

These two books demonstrate the difficulty of combining theoretical and historical studies on the Third Reich. The use of the data on profits alone does not demonstrate the nature of the relations between industry and the Nazi Party; Sohn-Rethel gives a preliminary answer on the re-evaluation of the role of profits. The editors of Sohn-Rethel's book hint that the problem is even larger. "The Marxist analyses of fascism stand before the difficulty that the evidence of their assertions is difficult to demonstrate, because neither the documents nor the memoirs attempt to document fascism from the viewpoint and in the interest of its victim" (p. 7). They do not mean this as an excuse for resignation, but as an accurate appraisal of why one must try harder. These books by Hennig and Sohn-Rethel have contributed to this effort.

Michael Wilson

Fernand Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life, 1400-1800.* New York: Harper and Row. 462 pages. $3.95 paper.

A great deal has been written lately in academic journals and periodicals about the "Annales school" of historians, and even more about its recognized leader, Fernand Braudel. Braudel's fame derives not so much from his tenure as editor of *Annales: economies, societés, civilisations*, as from his most significant book, published in two volumes in 1949, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (English edition published by Harper and Row: New York, 1972 and 1974). The book under review here was published nearly twenty years later, in 1967, under the title *Civilisation Materielle et Capitalisme* as the first of a projected two volume work, the second volume of which has not as yet appeared. This book is an excellent introduction to the work of Braudel and the contemporary historians associated with Annales, primarily because it illustrates the weaknesses of the school extremely well.

Braudel's principle concern as an historian is with the "long-term" (as opposed to

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the "short-term") event, with the relatively static structures of history, against which he would attempt to understand historical change. Quantitative methods play a large part here, as the study of long-term phenomena most often takes the form of charts and curves of population growth, climate, prices, wages, interest rates, etc. The ultimate objective is to utilize these methods to create an historical "science" modelled upon linguistics and following Lévi-Strauss' structural anthropology. *Capitalism and Material Life* is a product of this attempt to lay the foundations for a science of history, and a reading of this book indicates that the project is in danger of collapsing with the first gust of wind.

Braudel distinguishes three "spheres" of social life: everyday material life; economic life; and capitalism, which is a more developed level of economic life. Only the first two spheres coexist simultaneously as differentiated structures, according to Braudel, since capitalism has the effect of dissolving these two spheres into each other. Braudel describes this schema in these terms: "There are at least three levels and three spheres: everyday material life, very widespread, concerned with basic necessities and short-range; economic life, calculated, articulated, emerging as a system of rules and almost natural necessities; and finally the more sophisticated capitalist mechanism, which encroaches on all forms of life, whether economic or material, however little they lend themselves to its manoeuvres" (p. xiii). *Capitalism and Material Life* is concerned with the first of these levels, while the second and third would presumably have been treated in the second volume. In organizing his work in this manner, however, Braudel has defeated himself in advance. He has relatively little difficulty in those sections of his book which deal with demography, geography, and climate, where his concern for the long-term is most readily realized (on a global scale), but he cannot maintain the purity of his structural concepts in those sections which cover food, fashion, housing, technology, money, and towns. In each of these latter categories there are significant changes during the period covered by this book which cannot be understood without cutting across the "levels" that Braudel seeks to maintain. As a result, there is no unity to this book. One chapter follows another without any internal connection. A theory of everyday life fails to emerge, while Braudel's structures collapse. It is not hard to see why the second volume has not materialized: it cannot, because Braudel's structuralist presuppositions exclude the only perspective which can mediate between everyday life and history. Braudel's history, like the history of Lévi-Strauss and Althusser, is a "subjectless" history, and therefore devoid of "project" or "telos" or of any other attempt to explicate the subject-object dialectic of history.[1]

In addition to the theoretical flaws which fatally afflict Braudel's work, there are several technical problems. Although he is attempting to write world history, Braudel's material is heavily weighted toward Europe, with less on China and North Africa, and still less on the rest of the world. A major source of irritation is the fact that the book is totally devoid of documentation (Braudel even presents quotations without mentioning the person or work being cited), except for the occasional dropping of a name. The omission of references is more than a triviality in this case because Braudel has amassed a great deal of information on a wide range of subjects which the reader might wish to pursue.

1. For a discussion of this point see Robert D'Amico, "The Contours and Coupures of Structuralist Theory," *Telos* 17 (Fall 1973).

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Whatever the limitations of Braudel's conception of history, and the consequent failure of *Capitalism and Material Life* to realize its objectives, this book deserves to be read. Although they fail to achieve a unity, the separate sections of the work are full of interesting facts and observations. Braudel is obviously an extremely capable historian, on his own terms, and his insights in the areas of demography, climate, and diet are especially important to any attempt to formulate a more adequate social theory.

Nick Xenos

Hilda Scott, *Does Socialism Liberate Women? Experiences from Eastern Europe*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1974. 240 pages. $7.95.

Critical students of the more "orthodox" socialist societies should not be surprised to read that these countries have not successfully resolved the problems with which women contend. Just as all Soviets or Czechs or Bulgurs have not yet reached "liberation"—that synthesizing process of achieving identity, equality, autonomy, and collectivity—so Soviet, Czech, or Bulgarian women share the uncertain status of the other subnational special interest groups with territories and cultures of their own. Because women's territory, that is, their bodies, and women's culture, that is, their traditional concerns, handicrafts and manufacture, manner of comportment, language, and general approach to life, are so peculiarly interdependent with those of the dominant society, women's liberation poses a very basic threat of decline and dissolution to the dominators. If women refuse to bear children, for example, then the population, including the work force, will decline. If women cease to perform the socializing function into which they have been socialized (as aid and comfort to both children and men), then the society's continuity and legitimacy may dissolve. So, in socialism as in capitalism, the dominant society has been reluctant to leave the jurisdiction over women's territory and culture to women.

From the broad, exciting question of Hilda Scott's title—*Does Socialism Liberate Women?*—one would have expected not only documentation of the means and mechanisms by which this domination has been continued, but also speculation about some ultimately causal factors, beginning with the nature of socialism, the nature of liberation, and the nature of women. Since Scott's research on means and mechanisms is quite thorough, at least as far as social, economic, and administrative modes of domination are concerned, this review seeks some of the needed speculation about the causal connections between relatively objective factors and subjective manifestations of male domination under socialist regimes. Undoubtedly, the subject requires at least a book and probably a metaphilosophy of its own. Briefly, however, several structural factors appear most significant: the consequences of industrialization, the endurance of revolutionary experience, the orientation of the communist party towards domestic *Realpolitik,* the equilibration of "socialist" norms, and the tolerance of diversity. An underlying problematic which remains to be explored is the continued relevance of bourgeois society to both socialism and capitalism.

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That much of women's work is unskilled, according to criteria set by the workaday world of the dominant society, lays the basis for much of their continued exploitation. A country which is either gearing up for or intensifying heavy industry seems always to adopt the classically exploitative capitalist-behavioralist model of gaining mass efficiency through the selective reward of individuals.[1] This model requires both skilled and unskilled strata in the work force. The former are comprised of persons who, even in their relatively low social position, control those limited resources made available to workers: schooling, job training, self-help through unionization. Obviously, these resources also control access to the factor of "experience," which directly determines career mobility and indirectly influences, through the scope of work performed, job satisfaction. While the skilled strata are recruited overwhelmingly from those groups which constitute the dominant society in every social and territorial realm, the unskilled strata are made up of those who are consigned to be dominated and hence "protected" by them, e.g., the racial, ethnic, social, and sexual out-groups.

The logic of domination-protection by the "skilled" strata, which is mirrored in each social group, seems an integral part of the industrialization model in all societies except, perhaps, China and Cuba. Partially, this pattern has meshed with the perceived need in the early stages of industrialization for a larger reservoir of cheap labor, a domestic source of demand, and a restriction of competition to "manageable" proportions. Obviously, societies with an already high birth-rate and traditional or other normative restrictions on competition (for example, China or Cuba) would appear as likely candidates for moderating the sexist consequences of industrialism. As Scott illustrates, Czechoslovakia falls into an earlier model. Although we may have been willing to apply this critical evaluation to capitalist societies, our collective appreciation of women's achievements in socialist societies seems not to have advanced past the Webbs' infatuation with rosy-cheeked (and frostbitten?) female ditchdiggers, streetcleaners, and highway crews. If these are the Galateas to whom theorists of socialist utopia respond, then some examination of praxis is in order.

Theoretically, socialist thought destroys the sacred illusions of women's blame and shame through the historical imagination (mainly Engels'), formal ideology (Marx's, Lenin's), and laws that it has inspired. These tendencies meet, at times, in the granting of rights such as contraception, abortion, equal access to educational institutions, and communal care for children. Moreover, the secular or demystified basis on which women are to be accepted and the genuine role models of revolutionaries like Luxemburg, Zetkin, and Kollontai suggest that women in socialist countries can march directly from subordination and dependency to full equality with men. Such are the socialist givens, but they are all too frequently subverted by a practice which gives primacy to pursuing power rather than equality. Was it the continued threat of civil war, the external hostility which was perceived as "encirclement," or the program of heavy industrialization which made the East European socialist countries, following the Soviet Union, hold women and national-ethnic minorities to a subordinate status? As with the cases of income differentials and internal dissent, must the problem of women's equality also await an era of peace and

1. Cf. Frederic J. Fleron, Jr. and Lou Jean Fleron, "Administration Theory as Repressive Political Theory: The Communist Experience," *Telos* 12 (Summer 1972), pp. 63-92.

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prosperity for its resolution? Whatever the immediate causes, the ultimate rationale for women's subordination is deeply rooted and disturbing even within the revolutionary socialist movement. We may well tease ourselves with the query: Was Krupskaya liberated? Was Ilyich? Their example was only the prototype, but it poses the question of whether any tutelary party will run the political and psychological risks of complete equality.

From our small but growing stock of knowledge about life in China, Cuba, and North Vietnam, it appears that women in these societies may have come more to grips with the problems of liberation, in the sense defined above, than in many other socialist and capitalist countries. Of course, this observation runs the risk of relativity: that is, it may reflect either increased critical awareness on the part of the observer or absolutely small but relatively great gains on the part of the observed. Or the low selectivity of information on which we must depend (impressions of visitors, televised news reports and documentaries, verbatim but perhaps carefully edited interviews presented by foreigners) may mislead us. Certainly, by now we are put off by the pious pronouncements of presidia. Nonetheless, the publicly visible roles of women as workers, wives, and mothers indicate that their acceptance into a community of equals is no less, and probably greater, than in other societies.[2] Several possible hypotheses—all taken from political explanations—may account for the difference.

First of all, we may discount the existence of a common prior culture, including a common religious ethos, in China, Cuba, and North Vietnam. To the extent that they do share certain pre-revolutionary social forms, they have all been peasant societies, but the position of peasant women relative to that of peasant men is rarely equal. Other factors, however, seem more plausible. All three countries have engaged or are still engaged in a long struggle for power; all three struggles have been based on protracted guerrilla war. The mass participation required by guerrilla warfare socializes persons who have previously been unreceptive to or unavailable for mobilization into sharing resources, taking responsibility for themselves and others, and, in many cases, holding to an ascetic lifestyle. This was amply demonstrated by Yugoslav Partisans from 1941 to 1945, also.[3] During this process of resocialization, women fight in guerrilla units (although they may be used more in intelligence and supply corps than in battle).[4] Those who remain at home carry out the functions of support forces. In their private lives (which also become more obviously linked to the general society), they assume the role of head of household. In the collective deprivation of partisan war, women begin to receive a measure of the respect due them. Revolutionary asceticism (which is called, in Yugoslavia, the Partisan or SKOJ—Communist Youth—Ethic) merely idealizes the pragmatics of comradely relations.

Needless to say, neither asceticism nor comradeship necessarily survives the guerrilla

2. We note, of course, the low or token representation of women in these political leaderships as in all others. One Chiang Ching, one Madame Binh do not stand political-sexual relationships on their head. (Who, by the way, is their Cuban counterpart?)

3. Svetozar Stojanovic has criticized the lingering pervasiveness of this revolutionary asceticism in more prosperous social conditions, which may be related to postrevolutionary hypocrisy and cynicism. *Between Ideals and Reality* (New York, 1973), chapter 10.

4. See Sheila Rowbotham, *Women, Resistance and Revolution* (New York, 1974), pp. 212, 223-224.

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period.[5] The political leadership must choose mechanisms for mobilization and motivation which are consonant with the society's pure and practical goals. To varying degrees, China, North Vietnam, and Cuba have chosen—where choice has been possible—to deemphasize both heavy industrialization and material incentives. So far, they have relied on the harsh but familiar regimen of an agrarian economy, restricted consumption, and semi- or pseudo-voluntary work brigades. Exactly which element of this combination accounts for women's advance? Although there seem to be tendencies, inherent in the establishment of an industrial regime, toward each stratum's exploitation of the strata below it, no one has discerned a model of humanistic egalitarianism in peasant society since the time of the Russian Populists. Then could it be that, with the compulsory suppression of differences, women and everyone else are submerged into rather than accepted into a "community of equals"? To point to a visible counter-example, in those societies which have rather freer consumption of personal goods (through small fashion industries, private dressmakers, sale of cosmetics), some of the women fall back into patterns of dressing, making up, and similarly actualizing their attractiveness for men.[6]

This is not completely the women's fault. Many of them are new to urban milieux and urbanism's sensual promiscuity. Moreover, by the luck of the draw, perhaps, socialist regimes came to several societies in which men traditionally treated women cruelly. Countries as different, for example, as Poland and Yugoslavia share a historical male chauvinism. Is this an artifact of East European, or even general European (think of French and Italian men), culture which has not been displaced by socialist thought? Even today, much social interaction in socialist Europe is still founded on men's domination over women: joking between men, initial encounters between a man and a women (especially if she is a foreigner), division of chores in married life. Although the legal systems of socialist states have forbidden the cruel and unusual punishment, especially by beating, of wives, I observed while living in Belgrade three years ago that women felt insecure and impotent, not in their sexuality, but in their relationships with men. Several times I saw young men hitting young women in the street: once, this happened in front of my apartment house on a Saturday night, and the young man left the young woman crying on the curb. Occasionally I was in situations in which men were rude to me or to others. I expected the wives or girlfriends who accompanied them to intervene, to remonstrate, to reprimand. None did, except for one wife, whose timid protestations were ignored. I have speculated briefly about the influence of mothers (*cherchez la mère!*) on such relationships, but I am not sure to what degree Yugoslav mothers are accorded sanctity rather than authority.[7]

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5. Indeed, the near-universality of technological society and its sexual permissiveness leads Theodore Roszak to conclude, "If the communist regimes of the world have not yet found ways to institutionalize sexual permissiveness, it is because the party organizations are still under the control of grim old men whose puritanism dates back to the days of primitive accumulation." *The Making of a Counter-Culture* (Garden City, New York, 1969), p. 19.

6. I once disagreed with a Yugoslav woman-friend on this point. While I implied that mascara casts the shadow of doubt upon a woman revolutionary, she said that wearing make-up and being a revolutionary were not mutually exclusive. She also implied that my opinion was symptomatic of American Puritanism. On women's consumption of beauty, femininity, etc., cf. Henri Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World* (New York, 1971), p. 73.

7. Cf. Eugene A. Hammel, "The Jewish Mother in Serbia or *Les Structures alimentaires de la*

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In the Yugoslav films of Dušan Makaveyev, especially his first film, "Man Is not a Bird,"[8] the women of what appears to be a typical industrial town emerge as worn out and betrayed by brutal husbands or brutal parents, themselves brutalized by "classical" industrial living and working conditions. For example, a worker's wife, miserable and without family in this town, finds that her husband has given her red dress to his mistress. She cries on the floor of the closet until her husband comes home, already angered by events in his extramural life. Sniffling, she finally tells him why she is sad, and he, at the table, curses and throws the bread across the room. She picks up the loaf from the floor and kisses it tearfully: a respectful vestige of peasant culture in an otherwise barbarized society. If, like the young protagonist, any woman in this film presents a sad but determined independence, I don't know whence it springs. Perhaps it begins in having one's own job (under these conditions, a room of one's own may be a luxury). Makaveyev's film and several Czech films made between 1965 and 1968 imply a quest for independence in the romantic experiences of young women who seem to be the first generation of working women in their families; these are the hairdressers, switchboard operators, and other low-paid service workers who, in today's industrial society, frequently end up married to blue-collar workers.

In general, socialist regimes have eradicated neither the physical disabilities of both sexes nor the psychological impediments to sexual equality. Furthermore, European socialist societies (including the Soviet Union) have not adequately confronted the structural elements of urban and industrial milieux which seem to make women nervous, weary, and alienated from, on the one hand, their own desires, and, on the other, the general society. What do women desire in socialist societies? Aside from the "hard-core" stratum of women who choose or who would choose, if they could, exclusively to mother, which we may assume will survive indefinitely in all societies, most women in socialist societies are prevented from acting to the full extent of their human potential because of the tasks and chores which are still frequently their exclusive domain, for example, cleaning house or going to the open-air market early each morning to buy the day's groceries. They rely when they can on normative institutions such as day care centers and on extra-normative institutions such as supermarkets, frozen foods, live-in household helpers from the countryside (a temporary "domestic" stratum), and unemployed grandmothers. The women implicitly repudiate the old "male chauvinist" conventions, epitomized by the idiomatic connotation of "bedroom slipper" as a man who helps his wife with housework and the idea that only a woman knows how to buy groceries.

Many women in socialist society work because of economic necessity, but many also enjoy their work. A late-1960s Czechoslovak survey of working women in a northern Bohemian light industrial area found its 1,200 respondents almost equally divided on the question whether they would stay at home if they could.[9] Those women who were most committed to their work were in the professions; the least skilled women workers

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parenté," in Kroeber Anthropological Society, Essays in Balkan Ethnology, Special Publications no. 1 (Berkeley, 1967), pp. 55-62, and my book, *Beyond Marx and Tito: Theory and Practice in Yugoslav Socialism* (New York, 1975), pp. 200-202, 204.

8. As Makaveyev's last two movies ("WR" and "Sweet Movie") have departed from Yugoslav social reality both geographically and topically, they have lost the clear and critical beauty of his early work.

9. See chapter six of Scott's book, especially pp. 118-120.

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were least committed to working. Stage in the life cycle appears significant here as in questions of motivation and satisfaction in all societies. Thus, very young and very old women with few household responsibilities welcomed a job, even a strenuous, less skilled one, as a way of relating to the general society. However, nonprofessional women around the age of thirty seemed to prefer fulltime work in their own families. A 1967-68 Czechoslovak survey of young couples in rural areas found even greater preference among women for staying at home. Moreover, the husbands, particularly those who have less formal education, showed an extreme preference for keeping their wives at home.[10]

Despite a generation of "socialist" socialization in the East European countries, norms of behavior toward women are still in flux. Many "socialist" men still judge women as capriciously (combining both standardization and randomness) as by the size of breasts or buttocks, and, indeed, men in many ways remain in positions in which they must judge women (doctors, political leaders, managers, foremen). Thus women are victimized by male arbiters of social norms—one of the best parts of Scott's book deals with male Czechoslovak doctors' vetoing abortions—as well as by male violators of social norms, for example, the small but growing number of rapes. Furthermore, diversity in women's living arrangements and sexual styles is relatively unknown, for there is a strong norm of heterosexually-based nuclear families. Possibly being alone—whether in the immediate, physical sense, as in a public place, or in the metaphysical sense of living as an autonomous individual—is regarded suspiciously. I do not know whether this is a general element of social-order-cum-social-control—for I think that all modern societies regard the nuclear family as the least threatening social unit—or whether the intended communalism of socialist society intensifies the pressure to form a family. In socialist rather than capitalist society, social-service benefits accrue to everyone who is employed (except to the self-employed, including peasants), so there is less compulsion to marry in order to be "taken care of." Nonetheless, living arrangements on bases other than blood or marriage are rare. Societal factors such as the housing shortage, the political decision to increase the population, traditional morality, and the hassle involved in procuring the benefits to which illegitimate children are legally entitled[11] all mitigate in favor of marriage, so that, despite its apparent frequency, nonmarital sex is not bruited about. As a form of deception, extramarital sex is condemned in these as in other societies. Generally in socialist societies, sexual pleasure is not a topic of public discourse, and lesbianism and homosexuality are not much in evidence. This may be the result of a traditional taboo, but homosexuality is also considered frivolous by socialist morés.

Although there are significant differences between women's movements in socialist and capitalist countries, pressure for the recognition of women's special problems

10. These preferences do not compare unfavorably with those expressed by Americans. In a 1970 study of 6,740 women under the age of 45 who were or had been married, 80% of the respondents agreed with the statement, "It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and the family." Fewer than half of the respondents agreed that a working woman could combine house and outside work. Even respondents under thirty generally preferred a loving husband to an independent status. Many women in the study did not hope that their daughters would have an interesting job outside the home. Judith Blake, "The Changing Status of Women in Developed Countries," *Scientific American* 231 (September, 1974), pp. 137-47.

11. Cf. pp. 202-203.

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arose in both types of society during the 1960s. Hilda Scott points this out several times in her book,[12] but she does not suggest a reason. Raised consciousness of hypocritical discrimination, jealousy, and hatred between sexes as well as races and national-ethnic groups may be related to an increased willingness for introspective self-examination and an increased demand for greater psychical rewards in a physically unrewarding social environment. People have also shown greater attentiveness to the rational, though unsystematic and personalized, demystification of social institutions. Perhaps the generation which reached young adulthood during the relative social equality of World War II (say, Betty Friedan's generation) grew to a mature reconsideration of the actual equality that they were subsequently denied. Perhaps an equality which was perceived by others as highly visible and by the non-equals, themselves, as superficial sprang its own contradictions. Interestingly, the current women's liberation movement in capitalist countries arose out of the laments of intellectuals *manquées* and women in scholarly or other creative fields who were prevented by their male colleagues and superiors from seeking a level commensurate with their ability. Out of their increasingly distinct and pained consciousness they formed new organizations. However, in socialist countries there is no women's liberation movement. From the time that each communist party comes to power, it maintains separate women's organizations, but often, to use Stalinist terminology, they function as transmission belts to mobilize support for the socialist state. Support for women's liberation under socialism has come from general social-welfare institutions like population councils and research, especially sociological research, institutes rather than from women's associations. Finally, some measures generally considered progressive in terms of social equality and women's rights, concerning social-welfare benefits for women as individuals and as mothers, have proved to be either unimplemented by or too expensive for socialist governments. Thus to some extent they have been honored in the breach. But 25 years after their incorporation into the legal systems of socialist countries, they have begun to appear—though still very rarely—among the demands of the most aggressive capitalist labor unions, e.g., New York City school and college teachers have the right to paternity and maternity leave. Is it possible that American public and private corporations will grant such benefits, and that they will manage to implement them more completely than the socialist governments have? Given the rocky road on which most American proposals for systematic and guaranteed health care usually get ground down, as well as the general economic situation, I would think that such benefits will prove "too costly" here, too.

Hilda Scott's examination of the problems of women under socialism is a useful survey of Czechoslovak experience, for she has put together data from laws, opinion surveys, demographic analyses, and the work of various Czechoslovak scholars which are no doubt unknown to foreigners. This material is probably most useful to people involved in social planning and social policy, for they should learn from the Czechoslovak mistake of partial implementation due to poor financing, bad faith, and preferences ultimately prejudicial to female breeders and male workers. The problem, of course, is that these basic impediments are difficult to overcome, and Scott does well to examine them. However, as these brief remarks indicate, Scott's book is falsely labeled. A more appropriate title might have been *Czechoslovak Laws, Opinion, and*

12. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

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Experience Concerning Women's Problems, which accurately describes the body of Scott's work. Scott does devote two chapters (2 and 3) to a review of socialist approaches to women from Engels through Bebel and Lenin to the 1936 Soviet Constitution, but this material is covered more thoroughly in Rowbotham's book. It is superfluous in this context and may actually bog the reader down; at least, I didn't begin to take notice until chapter 5 (coincidentally entitled "The Awakening"), in which Scott's concrete examination of Czechoslovak experience since 1950 begins.

Scott might have included some speculation about two issues that she raises—but only for a brief, questioning instant—in her book. First, as suggested above, she might have considered the commonality and the dissimilarity of women's movements, or at least the concentration on women's problems, which developed in various parts of the world during the 1960s. Second, she might have come to some conclusion about the process of selective sexual socialization. By the end of the book (p. 208), she is willing to commit herself to a Laingian statement about women's schizophrenia-inducing socialization, but that is her only general comment on the topic. Although Scott's viewpoint is critical, her book is eminently practical, and the question *Does Socialism Liberate Women?* requires a more theoretical examination of, in the words of Czech demographer Helena Švarcová, "the dialectical relationship between the natural and social sides of reproduction" (p. 159).

Sharon Zukin

David Cooper, *The Grammar of Living*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1974. 151 pages.

Although David Cooper's new book, *The Grammar of Living*, contains numerous insights into the problems facing the individual's psyche and body in today's capitalist societies, the bulk of the book continues along the already down-trodden paths of anti-psychiatry, spiritualism, and existentialism. As in Cooper's earlier works (e.g., *Psychiatry and Anti-Psychiatry* and *The Death of the Family*), therapy—however radical—often appears as a substitute for theory and political praxis. In other words, what Russell Jacoby has called "the tension in theory and therapy" (*Telos* 17), has not yet been recognized. Further, bourgeois society is lurking in the background as the enemy shaping the individual's mind and actions, but in the process of "liberation," the subject-object dialectic disappears with society, and freedom becomes primarily a matter of orgasms, LSD, therapy, and meditation. It should be emphasized, however, that Cooper is not concerned with the revolutionary situation in which capitalism is destroyed, but with the "pre-revolutionary context" and the psychic preparation of the individual within that context.

Language is central to Cooper's theory of consciousness and in order to move beyond reified and historically outdated concepts he reformulates, with limited success, some of the traditional psychoanalytical categories. As in the previous works of anti-psychiatry, the philosophical roots of this analysis of consciousness are phenomenology and existentialism. Cooper's "grammar of living" includes, among other things, a description of the best conditions under which to drop acid, an "Orgasm Manifesto" (promising the possibility of fifty orgasms in an hour for the

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woman), an explanation of anti-psychiatry, and a critique of establishment psychoanalysis and psychiatry.

In a chapter on the overcoming of envy and jealousy, Cooper concludes: "In the case of both envy and jealousy, the challenge is for us to accept our autonomy and our essential aloneness in the struggle. Solidarity is then created on the basis of the courageous assumption of a good aloneness. To accept our autonomy is to become politically real" (p. 86). This is problematic, and can illustrate a dilemma which exists throughout the book. Without an explicit elaboration of the dialectical relationship between the "autonomous" individual and society, any talk of autonomy can easily turn into an acceptance of privatization which is, as we know, at the heart of bourgeois society. This celebration of autonomy in Cooper's theory can be partially explained by the preoccupation with relationships and intersubjectivity. It might be possible to conceive of an existential autonomy in relation to other individuals, but no autonomy exists for the individual in relation to society today. Although, initially, he seems to treat envy and jealousy as an extension of "property-owning societies," this link to society is dropped and the problem is in the end reduced to one between individuals. In defense of Cooper we must add, however, that in his "pre-revolutionary context" the personal overcoming of envy and jealousy can only occur on the level of the individual. But, then it is therapy—not revolutionary praxis. Society, which caused the problem in the first place, is left untouched. A similar problem is present in an attempt to dispense with "the inner" and "the outer," and introjection and projection. Cooper states: "...no introject has meaning apart from its expression in the world. The world, that is inside the outside, once again is all that matters" (p. 89). "The world," unfortunately, turns out to be limited to other beings. While it might be true that "the inner," when it is penetrated deeply enough, becomes a manifestation of "the other," this "outer" cannot be limited to other individuals but has to include the social and economic reality—a reality which is neglected by Cooper.

"The grammar" also urges us to "go back and re-live" our lives, as well as discover "where we stand"; the latter discovery supposedly leading to a realization of "the importance of acting without thinking" (p. 111). Elsewhere we are told to "comprehend" without expression our comprehension (p. 90). Notwithstanding that today, when society talks nonsense, silence makes sense, Cooper is again falling into an unacceptable celebration of unreflected spontaneity. The whole book is written in this tone which promises salvation and-or revelation, rather than social change, through various spiritual undertakings and thus encourages mystification which is the opposite side, but still the same coin, of reification, and will eventually produce more frustration and fewer revolutionaries. Cooper expresses an awareness of this problem, however, and stresses the necessity to "return" (whether after the orgasm, the acid trip, or meditation) to the world in order to transform it. "There must be a promise to return to the world, less afraid of death, of orgasm and of madness. One is then freer to act on every level of one's own being and of social being to change the world" (p. 131). Jacoby's "law" ("mystical politics produces mysticism without politics") has not been completely confirmed. Cooper remains on the level of mystical politics. In *The Grammar of Living* this turns out to mean therapy for revolutionaries, which is important, but it is not to be confused with revolutionary theory. Cooper is a Castañeda in revolutionary guise.

Folke Lindahl

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SHORT JOURNAL REVIEWS: *

AUT AUT, No. 144 (November-December 1974)

FRANCO FERGNANI, *" 'La Questione Gramsci:' una Proposta di Riconsiderazioni."* This is a critical analysis of the relation between philosophy, politics, and ideology in Gramsci. Having shown how the theme of ideology in Gramsci substitutes that of alienation and mediates between philosophy and politics, Fergnani confronts and rejects a whole series of critiques of Gramsci meant to show his idealism and "non-Marxist" perspective. Most seriously devastated are the idiocies spouted by Riechers in his miserable book on Gramsci. AGNES HELLER, *"Movimento Radicale e Utopia Radicale."* In the attempt to justify radical philosophy, Heller seeks to unite sociology and critical economics while legitimating radical utopian thought. Thus, the task of radical philosophy is seen as the mediation between radical utopia and radical movements. LAURA BOELLA-BRECCIA, *"Economia e Politica nello Sviluppo della Nuova Sinistra Ungerese."* An analysis of the political predicament of the "Budapest School" and of the repression to which they have been subjected—an analysis which examines developments up to Fall 1974 (going past Frankel and Martin's account in *Telos* 17 which stopped at 1972). UMBERTO CURI, *"Sul Concetto di Progresso nella Scienza."* A critical report of the Chiavari Conference on the "Concept of Progress in Science" (September 23-26, 1974). After outlining the main arguments of the papers delivered by L.J. Cohen, Crombie, Rossi-Monti, Bellone and Dieudonnè, the author outlines a Marxist alternative. FRANCO RELLA, *"Una Tomba per Edipo? Nota su Deleuze-Guattari."* A critique of Deleuze and Guattari's work prior to *L'Anti-Oedipe* and subsequent to it. ANNA TREU, *"Esperienze di Fabbrica, Theoria della Società e Ideologia in Simone Weil."* A detailed intellectual biography of Simone Weil. *"Selected Reviews of Foreign Journals."*

BULLETIN OF SOCIALIST ECONOMISTS (Spring 1974)

ELMAR ALTVATER et al., *"On the Analysis of Imperialism in the Metropolitan Countries."* This includes a preface which outlines four variants of "classical" theories of imperialism (the underconsumptionist theories of Hobson, Luxemburg and Sternberg; the "harmony" theories of Tugan-Baranowsky and Hilferding; Bucharin and Grossman's criticism of the latter, which the authors pursue further; and that explanation which stresses the rise of finance capital, monopoly and the state apparatus), and those theories which have emerged since World War Two. Within this framework, recent tendencies in the development of capitalist states are outlined by tracing empirically the developmental stages of West German capital accumulation. BOB ROWTHORN, *"Skilled Labour in the Marxist System."* Yet another, this time highly mathematized, discussion of Boehm-Bawerk's claim that the category of skilled labor illuminates a contradiction in Marx's theory of value. JOHN HARRISON, *"British Capitalism in 1973 and 1974: The Deepening Crisis."* The British crisis and Wilson's strategies are understood as expressing the fundamental contradiction between the economic need to increase the rate of exploitation and the political need to reduce such extractiveness. JIM SMYTH, *"Changing Nature of Imperialism in Ireland."* An analysis of changing patterns of imperialist domination of the South within the last two decades.

CATALYST, No. 8 (1974)

ANDREW WERNICK, *"The Rehabilitation of Durkheim and the State of Modern Sociology."* This is a Durkheimian sandwich which advocates at the beginning and end of the article a critical rereading of Durkheim as part of an answer to the present conceptual and theoretical inadequacies in sociology. The most recent attempts by Wallwork and Lukes to retotalize Durkheim's thoughts after Parsons' hatchet job remain partial. In between is a good but *déjà vu* discussion on the problematics underlying the present sociological crisis, including the Marxist variant. For example, what is the best or correct method for grasping social life without sinking into empiricism or relativism? How can one conceptualize and know an object which is doubly determined—by the social subject and by objective social determinations? What is the relationship between science, ideology, political praxis and sociology? After Wernick's project is completed, it may become evident that Durkheim has more errors than truths to offer, thereby

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* This section was prepared by the Toronto *Telos* Group composed of Ilene Crawford, John Keane, Steve Levine, Folke Lindahl, Janet Lum, Ray Morrow, Peter Murphy, Patrick Patterson, Paul Piccone, Greg Renault, Brian Singer, Wodek Szemberg, Nick Xenos.

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begging the question of where (if at all) one looks in the classical tradition to revitalize sociology and Marx. It may also become evident that the whole enterprise of establishing the scientificity and objectivity of sociology is a misguided endeavor. DOROTHY SMITH, *"The Ideological Practice of Sociology."* Although Smith tries to reconstitute the dialectical tension between the subject and object in the social sciences (e.g., regrounding concepts in the practical activities of actual living individuals), she slips into a romantic perspective: an objective world exists that will eventually be grasped by true non-ideological concepts. In fact, for Smith, the distinction between ideology and science is the difference between concepts or theories which obfuscate reality or give a true account of the way things really are. One wonders: reality, by what criteria and by whose definition? This is followed by PRADEEP BANDYOPADHYAY, *"A Critical Note,"* which correctly points out that concepts cannot be divorced from their epistemological genesis and be considered as mere tools to be used ideologically or not (as Smith appears to believe). However, most of his criticisms regarding Smith's inconsistency are misplaced. For example, there is nothing incoherent in asserting that both ideology and a social science adequate to bringing about a qualitatively different society are grounded in everyday life. It means that even repressive conditions contain emancipatory elements. JANICE REYNOLDS, *"Rape as Social Control."* A short, poorly argued article. While Reynolds is correct in saying that our formal laws regarding rape serve to maintain the dominant position of males in our society, the conclusion that rape or the fear of rape serves as a form of social control to keep women in line as opposed to being an expression of generalized violence and aggression, is much more tenuous. ROBERT WEGMANN, *" 'Ethnomethodology: Sociology Without Society?' A Comment on Mayrl."* BENG-HUAT CHUA, *"A Critique of Mayrl."* WILLIAM MAYRL: *"Reply to Wegmann and Chua."* This is an exchange in response to Mayrl's article, by the same title, in the last issue of *Catalyst*. Wegmann presents a clear discussion grounding phenomenological ethnomethodology in the Kantian problem of knowledge. Its preoccupation with language, meaning, everyday life as a non-problematic ongoing accomplishment has its ontological roots in the tension between the noumenal thing-in-itself and the phenomenal thing-as-experienced. In so doing, Wegmann bypasses the general thrust of Mayrl's argument—that the postulate of subjective interpretation actually inhibits sociological inquiry—to show that ethnomethodology's enterprise is qualitatively different from sociological inquiry. While Chua advances more specific criticisms, his attacks are not very well developed or supported and hence, Mayrl's devastating reply. This exchange reinforces the general impression that ethnomethodology has given so far: it promises much but has delivered little.

CRITIQUE, No. 3 (Autumn 1974)

ERNEST MANDEL, *"Ten Theses on the Social and Economic Laws Governing the Society Transitional between Capitalism and Socialism."* Mandel recapitulates in a clear and succinct manner the main tenets of the well-known thesis regarding the nature of the 'degenerated workers-states.' The contradictory character of these societies is being grounded in the conflict between two antagonistic logics of economic life: the logic of the plan and the logic of the market. This antagonism is then supposed to reflect the transitional character of social relations. ERNEST MANDEL, *"Some Comments on H.H. Ticktin's 'Towards a Political Economy of the USSR."* See *Critique* No. 2. CHRIS GOODEY, *"Factory Committees and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."* The author's intention is to present the complex structure of relationships linking the diverse institutions in the early years of the Russian revolution. In a discussion of the nature of 'workers' control' Goodey skillfully extracts the contradictory elements that characterized this form of self-government. R. SELUCKY, *"Marxism and Self-Management."* Selucky argues that there is an inherent contradiction between central planning and self-management. He views central planning as incompatible with an implementation of the humanist and democratic principles. Self-management, on the other hand, would require some form of market mechanism which according to Selucky does not necessarily threaten the socialist character of production. H.H. TICKTIN, *"Socialism, the Market and the State."* Ticktin identifies Selucky's views as Proudhonist. He argues that certain assumptions that led Selucky to his particular view are not Marxist and furthermore are typical for the individualist tendencies of East-European intellectuals.

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ECONOMY AND SOCIETY, Vol. 4, No. 1 (February 1975).

G. CARCHEDI, *"On the Economic Identification of the New Middle Class."* This is an attempt to define the new middle class from an economic standpoint, with particular reference to the capitalist production relations. These relations bind the three elements of the capitalist production process and can be regarded from the viewpoint of the ownership of the means of production, of productiveness, and of the function performed (i.e., whether the agent performs the function of capital or the function of labor). Thus, capitalist production relations are the relations binding (1) the non-owner of the means of production-the producer-the laborer; (2) the owner of the means of production-the non-producer-the non-laborer; and (3) the means of production. Thus, the element of the function performed is introduced within the capitalist production relations. Much of this essay attempts to define the meaning of performing the functions of labor and capital. The working class and the capitalist class are identified in terms of correspondence between the three aspects of the production relations, while the middle class is identified in terms of non-correspondence. The most important part of this new middle class are those who perform both the global functions of capital *and* the collective worker. Proletarianization of this sector is explained in terms both of devaluation of their labor power (a tendency common to all phases of capitalism) and in terms of the progressive disappearance, for the majority of the agents making up the new middle class, of the global function of capital *vis-à-vis* the function of the collective worker—an aspect seen to be peculiar to monopoly capitalism. ERNESTO LACLAU, *"The Specificity of the Political: the Poulantzas-Miliband Debate."* A short summary of this widely known debate is presented in epistemological terms, and an attempt made to demonstrate the theoretical roots of that which Miliband has labelled the "structuralist abstractionism" of the Poulantzas approach. Further, to Miliband, a central deficiency of Poulantzas' approach is pinpointed: its inability to explain theoretically the process of historical change. TED BENTON, *"Claude Bernard's Epistemology: a Reply to Paul Q. Hirst."* PAUL Q. HIRST, *"Bernard's Epistemology: a Reply to Ted Benton."*

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY ASIA, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1974)

GREG O'LEARY, *"Ultra-Leftism and Lin Piao."* The Cultural Revolution, especially in its early stages, aimed at progressively eliminating professional expertise to the detriment of a high degree of political consciousness, decreasing wage differentials, and combatting the emergence of Party bureaucracy and the hegemony of bourgeois culture. The current campaign against "ultra-leftism" must be understood as a reaction to some of the excesses of this campaign against rightists. Thus, the original intentions of politicizing the army is seen to have resulted in a tendency to make the army politically dominant; the aim of "reddening" expertise tended to deny the importance of expertise; the aim of opposing imperialism tended to deny the tactical opportunities to exploit inter-imperialist rivalries. HUYNH VAN LY, *"The Two Existing South Vietnamese Administrations."* INGRID PALMER, *"Oil Prices and the Indonesian Economy."* An examination of the impact of increased oil prices and revenues accruing to Indonesia, indicating the likely intensification of underdevelopment. CHRISTOPHER COLLINGWOOD, *"Inflation and the Multinationals."* ANITA CHAN, *"Rural Chinese Women and the Socialist Revolution: an Inquiry into the Economies of Sexism."* Female struggle for liberation from the repressive, strongly patrilineal family system of traditional Chinese society is here traced through its two stages thus far: (a) prior to the mid-1950s, a movement to be recognized simply as "thinking human beings"; and (b) coinciding with the establishment of the communes, demands for equal pay for equal work, equal opportunity to participate in political work, and liberation from daylong housework. But this second phase is far from being completed. PETER BELL and BOONSANONG PUNYODYANA, *"The Sources of Social Change in Thailand."* An extended review of Norman Jacobs' *Modernization Without Development: Thailand as an Asian Case Study*. *"Documents."* Includes an interesting assortment of statements and reports from India, Sri Lanka, Sarawak, Thailand, Cambodia, Philippines and Malaysia.

KURSBUCH, No. 36 (June 1974): Special Issue on Money

"Drei Ansichten vom Geld." Brief selections from Moses Hess ("Ueber das Geldwesen," 1845), Tuiavii ("Von runden Metall und schweren Papier," 1905), and André Amar ("Psychoanalytischer Versuch über das Geld," 1956). KLAUS BUSCH and FRANK SEELOW, *"Leitfaden zur politischen Oekonomie des Geldes."* An elementary survey of the basic concepts of the political economy of money in modern capitalism. PAUL MATTICK, *"Die 'Zerstörung' des*

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Geldes." Chronic international currency crises are described in general terms as a manifestation of the movement toward the collectivization of the world economy, a process which is characterized, following Marx, as the destruction of capitalism within capitalism and of money itself within the money economy. JOCHEN REICHE, *"Permanente Inflation."* Drawing heavily upon Mandel's *Der Spätkapitalismus* (1972), the author argues that a general theory of inflation cannot be derived directly from *Das Kapital* which works with assumptions which produced trans-cyclical price rises. An historically specific analysis of the current inflation process reveals that capitalist economies have an exclusive choice between accelerating permanent inflation or stagnation and monetary collapse. Mandel's thesis of the "long waves" of accumulation and conjuncture is defended. The phase from 1945-1968 is described as one of accelerated accumulation and mild inflation, whereas 1969 (spurred on but not caused by the U.S. Vietnam inflation) marks the beginning of a long-term phase of declining accumulation and accelerated inflation. As system-immanent limits of surplus value realization are approached, strong price rises become a necessary means for maintaining sufficient rates of profit. AIKE BLECHSCHMIDT, GERHARD HOFFMANN, REINHARD VON DER MARWITZ, *"Das inflatorische Zusammenwirken von Kapitalkonzentration, Weltmarkt und Staatsintervention."* A theory of postwar inflation is proposed in terms of the interaction of increasing capital concentration (and the resulting transfer of value from competitive to monopolistic sectors during economic downturns), the initial deflationary effects of the expansion of world markets, and the inflationary effects of state deficit spending designed to head off depression at the end of a boom cycle. While this is taken to suggest that even more inflationary conjunctures are to be anticipated, the authors reject as speculative any implications this might have for the thesis of the tendential fall in the rate of profit. But the inherent limits of tolerable inflation will force the state to turn to income policies as an alternative to inflation as a device for stabilizing accumulation. Labor unions will be degraded to "mere state trade unions" if they continue with their economistic, pluralistic self-understanding. ULRICH JUERGENS, GUDRUN LINDER, *"Zur Funktion und Macht der Banken."* The gaps in praxis-relevant analysis of structures of domination is evident in banking where Marxist critics have fallen back upon "theoretically questionable and unclear" concepts such as Hilferding's "finance" capital. Thus the abstract, isolated demand for the nationalization of banking expresses a misunderstanding of the relationship between banks, the state and capital accumulation. Concrete analysis reveals that banking activity is ultimately subordinated to the general process of capital reproduction. The aspiration to introduce political criteria into bank decision-making glosses over this and falsely assumes a class-neutral, instrumental conception of the state. MATTHIS DIENSTAG, et al., *"Die Linke und das Geld. Ein Mosaik."* A witty commentary on the paradoxical position of the Left on the margins of a money economy which it is dedicated to abolishing, but which it can neither practically nor theoretically escape. GIORGIO PELLIZZI, *"Man trägt wieder alte Hüte."* On the rational kernel of recent expressions of conservatism. ANDREW KOPKIND, *"Neue amerikanische Mystik: Eine Massenflucht aus der Politik?"* On the collapse of the American political left and the rise of religious cultism. F.C. DELIUS, *"Ein Traum von Mozambique."* A poem.

LIBERATION, Vol. 19, No. 1 (January 1975)

MURRAY BOOKCHIN, *"Economics as a Form of Social Control."* The present economic crisis does not signal a return to good old-fashioned Marxist orthodoxy mainly because of the cultural and political impact of the sixties. This much of the argument is convincing but not new. Less convincing (and also not new) is his understanding of the present crisis which amounts to a conspiracy theory. Nixon, and now Ford, are deliberately creating inflation (monopolistic powers aside) to prevent the relatively affluent material conditions that had generated the social unrest of the sixties, thereby repressing liberatory possibilities. MARCHA SALO RIZZI, *"Diane Arbus Revisited."* Rizzi perceptively examines Arbus' art photographs against what she interprets to be Arbus' worldview. In a fragmenting American culture, only fragmented individuals are possible and Arbus portrays the scars. Only freaks who are "born with their trauma" display a sense of individual wholeness. Rizzi hits a particularly pertinent note when she says that Arbus mistook a stage of capitalist development for a state of permanent torture where only personal solutions are possible. STUART EWEN, *"Advertising as a Way of Life."* With the advent of industrial production which reduced paternal authority, stripped the family of most of its instrumental functions, redefined social relations and the concepts of time and space, advertising,

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consumerism and ultimately, mass culture asserted themselves as the authority. Advertising served to reconcile the social need for human relations and the economic imperative of destroying indigenous social bonds in favor of the bonds generated by the productive apparatus within the time-space dictates of corporate capitalism. What first appeared as an apparent alternative in interpersonal relations (bonds cemented by emotional interdependence rather than by the dictates of patriarchal authority) has become integrated into capitalism. Social relations remain but are mediated by the market place and communities which direct the way of life. LARRY LACK, *"Small Is Beautiful."* This is a short review of E.F. Schumacher's book (by the same title) on the suicidal materialism of modern centralized industrial organization. It is true, as Lack points out, that Schumacher offers more criticisms of centralization than discussions regarding the assumptions and viability of a wide-spread decentralization or suggestions concerning the ways in which one can expose the sham of our quantitative standard of living. But Lack is too conciliatory to Schumacher's naive idealism. For example, intermediate technology and development of widespread creative employment should replace the mass transfer of technology from the first to the third world. While Lack's only concern is to wonder how to apply this idea to the overdeveloped areas, one wonders how the reality of multinational corporations which have defined and will define the form and direction of the world's economic development could have been so blatantly ignored.

LIBERATION, Vol. 19, No. 2 (February 1975)

LEAH FRITZ, *"Feminism vs. Socialism: What Are Our Priorities?"* The radical literature ranges from scholarly polemical works to mainly ideological or educational consciousness-raising writings. This reprint of a sister solidarity speech falls in the latter category and as such serves its purpose. However, many women will find the romantic portrayal of womanhood and the women's movement difficult to accept. Even more difficult to accept are the parts that degenerate into a male-hating female chauvinism. GINA BLUMENFELD, *"What Is to Be Undone in the Women's Movement."* This has a neo-Leninist title but a Frankfurt bent. It presents a specific critique of Andrea Dworkin's book, *Woman Hating,* as well as a more general critique of the women's movement—its factionism, the loss of its original promise to abolish all forms of domination, the collapse of its goals into repressive means, its senitmentality, its pure pragmatism at the expense of real intellectual efforts and so on. While there is a lot of truth in Blumenfeld's criticisms, *Liberation* appeared hesitant to print the article. TOMMY TRANTINO, *"Captain Delicious and The Kid."* An angry account of prison life, in story form, by someone serving a life sentence. ALLEN GINSBERG, *"On Trantino."* MURRAY BOOKCHIN, *"Energy, 'Ecotechnocracy' and Ecology."* A polemic against the ecotechnocrats who see facile technological solutions to the present ecological crisis. LINN HOUSE, *"Totem Salmon."* An ecological consciousness raising account of salmon and fishing by a fisherman. It combines animism with *Scientific American.*

MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 26, No. 6 (November 1974)

PAUL M. SWEEZY, *"The Nature of Soviet Society."* This article is the first half of a review of Charles Bettelheim's *Les Luttes de Classes en URSS: Première Période 1917-1923,* which summarizes portions of the preface regarding the origin and purpose of the work. Sweezy relates how Bettelheim's identification of events in the Soviet Union with the task of building a socialist way of life, held since the mid-1930s, began to be questioned as a result of the Cuban and Chinese revolutions. Bettelheim's initial support finally gave way to explicit criticism following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, and led to studies resulting in the work on Soviet society here considered. Theoretically, the issue of Soviet failure can be generally formulated in terms of the "rigidification" of Soviet Marxism in economism, the interpretation which unilaterally subordinates the transformation of social relations to the development of the forces of production. This takes three main forms: (1) a juridical definition of the foundation of class which confuses legal abolition of private property with the abolition of real relations of production; (2) a strict emphasis on the primacy of the role of productive forces which reduces all possibilities for socialist development to the model of western industrialization; and (3) an abstract policy which regards the "withering away of the state" as a regulative (i.e., abstractly utopian) ideal immediately "postponed" due to the Soviet Union's isolated position *vis-à-vis* the capitalist West, but which cannot justify the unnecessarily repressive nature of the present Soviet state. For Bettelheim, the problem with economism is that it focuses on short- or medium-term

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interests of the proletariat exclusively; instead, true Marxism emphasizes the long-term interests of the whole population. Given this understanding, then, the primary task of an examination of Soviet society is an explanation of its development showing why economism triumphed over Marxism. ERLAND HOFSTEN, *"The Family-Planning Controversy."* This article is a critical examination of various Neo-Malthusian approaches to the population problem. The basic limitation of the Neo-Malthusian perspective is that it considers population growth the main issue, and diverts attention from its root causes in the social fabric. In the modern world, the increase in population is the result of the capitalist mode of production; any solution to the population problem involves a change in the mode of production.

MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 26, No. 7 (December 1974)

JACOB MORRIS, *"Stagflation."* This article takes the form of a critique of the September 1974 White House conference on inflation to show that the present inflationary depression is a re-emergence, on a higher level of economic development, of the stagnation of the 1930s. While the crisis of the 1930s was one of monopoly capitalism proper, the crisis of the 1970s is one of government-bulwarked monopoly capitalism which reveals the obsolescence of the Keynesian inflationary strategy. The new forms of capital realization—transfer payments to local governments and consumers to cover deficit spending, extensive military investments, and increased aid to political allies—reveal that while the crisis of the 1930s was one of the frustration of constructive alternatives to the development of capital, that of the 1970s is one resulting from the development of destructive aspects of the society—those very aspects necessary for the implementation of Keynesian policies. The answer is seen as a government with working class support, one which could address the immediate social crisis of stagflation as well as the long-term crisis in production. Such a development requires that organized labor adapt a socialist perspective. KEN'ICHI MIYAMOTO, *"Japanese Capitalism at a Turning Point."* In this article, an examination of the crisis of the Japanese economy in the 1970s reveals the extent to which the Marxist analysis of industrial capitalism applies to Japan. The crisis is manifest on many levels: a drop in monetary reserves and a corresponding drastic depreciation of the Yen; high inflation; disrupted distribution and consequent hoarding; unemployment; and an increase in the social ills of the 1960s such as pollution and urban conflict. The causes are seen to be the inflation which began in 1972, intensified by the oil crisis and consequent recession. However, these phenomena go hand in hand with unprecedented profits by those conglomerates large enough to benefit from the general social crisis, revealing the inadequacy of the Keynesian approach and justifying the Marxian. Further analysis along this line reveals that the Japanese economy is structured to encourage intensive capital accumulation, both public and private, and geared towards the promotion of heavy chemical and engineering industries. This in turn has resulted in a transformation of traditional agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors of the economy, a high degree of urbanization, and changes towards a mass consumption lifestyle. Finally, there is extensive dependence on the expansion of foreign markets for Japanese exports. Miyamoto concludes by noting that the current crisis threatens the heretofore peaceful nature of Japanese postwar development. HAROUB OTHMAN, *"The Tanzanian State: Who Controls It, Whose Interests Does It Serve?"* Joining the discussion debunking the myth of Tanzania as a model of socialism for underdeveloped countries, Othman claims that the institutions and structure of the Tanzanian state are the same as they were when the colonial regime left the country ten years ago. He holds that complete decolonization is a prerequisite for socialist development, and sees a mass based national liberation movement as the answer to the influence of the metropolitan centers.

MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 26, No. 8 (January 1975)

PAUL M. SWEEZY, *"The Nature of Soviet Society—Part II."* This is the second part of a review of the first volume of Charles Bettelheim's new study of the Soviet Union. Here Sweezy discusses the major themes of the text, and then goes on to raise some questions about the theory and method employed in the study. Bettelheim's thesis is that the Russian revolutionary forces lacked sufficient historical understanding to solve the problems of replacing an old order with a new society. This is a result of several factors: (1) the urban proletariat was relatively small to begin with, and quickly became decimated in the revolutionary struggle and civil war; (2) consequently, the revolutionary regime was forced to use much of the old tsarist bureaucracy, an

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essentially bourgeois state machine; (3) agricultural policies favoring small peasant holdings were initiated which paved the way for capital accumulation and consequent peasant class formation; and (4) despite state ownership, essentially capitalist relations of production were retained in industry, transportation and finance. With these trends, the structural basis for Soviet revisionism was laid. Sweezy has several objections to Bettelheim's treatment of the first stage of the development of Soviet society: (1) he criticizes the lack of dynamics in Bettelheim's class theory and suggests that the family rather than the individual is the more important determinant; (2) he criticizes Bettelheim's glorification of Lenin, which attributes the latter's economism to outside pressures only; and (3) he protests Bettelheim's claim that the Soviet Union is essentially capitalist; Sweezy feels that the issue is still open. IMAMU AMIRI BARAKA, *"Newark Seven Years Later: !Unidad y Lucha!"* This article claims that the black and Puerto Rican struggles of the 1960s which put black faces in high places in Newark has simply resulted in the installation of new puppets of monopoly capitalism's rule. This takes the form of an extremely polemical treatment of the 1974 Puerto Rican Labor Day riots in Newark. A CORRESPONDENT, *"Bangladesh: The Internalization of Counter-revolution."* This article is a brief examination of the class forces and material interests behind the reaction on both sides of the India-Bangladesh border, which contends that Bangladesh is in effect a protectorate of India. AIJAZ AHMED, *"Supplemental Remarks."* This is a response to the above article, which lists reasons for India's involvement in Bangladesh affairs, and which analyzes in more detail present trends in the country.

MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 26, No. 9 (February 1975)

PAUL M. SWEEZY and HARRY MAGDOFF, *"Banks: Skating on Thin Ice."* The purpose of this article is to show how the role played by banks in modern U.S. capitalism has led to changes resulting in increasing sources of economic instability having developed since the early 1960s and accelerated since the mid-1960s. The potentially unstable overextension of business debt and corresponding overreaching of the banks is necessary for capitalism's protection, interior development, and imperialist expansion. The two sides to the debt explosion are: (1) that the capitalists borrow as much as possible, and (2) the banks themselves aggressively increase lending. First of all, the borrowing by business reveals an increased use of debt capital, originating in the drive to increase the profit rates as well as the mass of profits for both the long and short term. Problems of reduced corporate liquidity aside (see "The Long-run Decline in Corporate Liquidity," in *Monthly Review*, September 1970), and assuming an unlimited supply of money, the limits of business debt acceleration lie in the margin of profit over interest payment. The usual answer to this interior limit has been inflation, giving rise to a vicious circle of debt obligation, interest charges, and rising prices. Secondly, by continually advancing funds in accord with both their social function as well as their nature as profit-seeking finance capital, the banks have begun to approach limits in their ability to continue the supply of credit, and have run up against their own liquidity problem. The usual protection banks keep against large withdrawals —cash reserves, short-term treasury bills and notes, long-term treasury and corporate bonds— has vanished, as is revealed by a recent drastic increase in figures showing loans as percentage of deposits. Pressure to compete for profit even as lending potential narrows, plus the need to protect their existing markets (i.e., borrowing business), has resulted in major banks approaching a ceiling of their *absolute* lending capacity. Since neither equity capital nor deposits have increased sufficiently, beginning in the 1960s the banks themselves have become major short-term borrowers, reproducing in themselves the liquidity crisis they helped postpone in business. Federal regulatory agencies are fully aware of the current dangerous state of affairs, but are helpless because (1) they are committed to the same goals as business and finance—the increase of profit and expansion of business opportunities—that led to the present crisis, and (2) in its later developments the debt structure has become too complex and delicate to be safely interferred with. Consequently, the government will shortly be faced with two alternatives: (1) salvaging businesses and banks that founder with direct financial aid, or (2) creating firmer financial foundations for U.S. business in general by assisting the greater concentration and centralization of the healthiest of the existing firms. JAMES F. PETRAS, *"The U.S.-Cuban Policy Debate."* This article examines some of the underlying reasons for a shift towards a more "liberal" policy among significant Congressional figures, and also considers the political framework which guides the conservative policy of the Kissinger foreign apparatus. While both the conservatives and the liberals agree in their opposition to socialism, their support of U.S.

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corporate interests, and on the desirability of reintegration of Cuba into world capitalism, there are fundamental differences in their overall approach to foreign policy which reflect on Cuba. The conservative perspective operates with the sphere-of-influence doctrine which has led to a serious underestimation of (1) growing Latin American support for re-establishment of relations with Cuba, (2) the growing decline of U.S. influence in hemispheric politics. On the other hand, the liberal position is based on a general uneasiness derived from at least partial perception of these conditions, and involves the recognition that the Cuban government must be dealt with in its present form for some time to come. Despite the application of selective détente (China and Russia, but not Cuba), it appears that changing realities in Latin America will force a change in U.S.-Cuban relations. IMMANUEL WALLERSTEIN, *"Class and Class Conflict in Africa."* The object of this article is to suggest a framework making possible a meaningful use of class analysis in contemporary Africa. The author distinguishes between (1) class in relationship to the means of production, i.e., the function of Africa in the world-economy, and (2) class as an actor to the degree that it becomes class-conscious, i.e., in national politics. In the peripheral areas of the world-economy, then, an anti-imperialist struggle is a mode of expression of class interest.

MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 26, No. 10 (March 1975)

PAUL M. SWEEZY and HARRY MAGDOFF, *"The Economic Crisis in Historical Perspective."* In this article the authors show that it follows from the main characteristics of the capitalist mode of production that the normal state of the American capitalist system in its monopoly stage is one of cyclical ups and downs in a context of continuing stagnation. This historical tendency is further aggravated at present by a financial liquidity crisis which has developed as a result of increased debt-financed spending since the 1940s, producing a growing inflation of prices superimposed on the general economic decline. SAMUEL BOWLES and HERBERT GINTIS, *"Class Power and Alienated Labor."* This article is a critique of the myth that the nature of work in capitalist society is dictated by science and reason in the form of technology and rational organization. Rather, the authors show that work under capitalism is alienating, that the alienation is socially rather than psychologically based, but only superficially a result of the structure of technology itself. The labor process under capitalism reveals contradictions between both the social need for commodities and the self-actualizing needs of the workers, and between the direction and completion of the production process. From this, Bowles and Gintis distinguish between alienated and integrated labor: an integrated sphere of social life should allow the self-realization of social labor through industrial democracy; alienated labor occurs when human needs are prevented from being socially met by the hierarchical organization of the labor process. The authors demonstrate that not only is there no necessary link between the hierarchical division of labor and efficiency, they also show that integrated labor in the form of industrial democracy would be more socially productive as well as efficient, a necessary part of the wider socialist goal of human liberation. IKE BALBUS, *"Politics as Sports: The Political Ascendency of the Sports Metaphor in America."* This article is a speculative structural interpretation of the significance of the function of sports as a legitimating mechanism of the American state. Balbus presents a twofold development: language drawn from sports is being used to characterize political life at the same time as sports itself is transformed into a Big Business. This development parallels the general legitimation problematic of the advanced American capitalist state: sports language is becoming political language at precisely the time when efficient operation of the system requires the mass internalization of legitimating ideology asserting (1) the neutral, "scientific" character of state economic decisions, (2) the competence of the experts, and (3) the overall rationality of the general policy plan. The symbolism of sports mediates the internalization of this ideology in two ways. First, the *form* of American sports reveals a structural homology between the contemporary sports contest and the technocratic model of politics: sports have increasingly become *technical* activities (athletic records as technique) which require participation by *experts* (the professional athlete radically separating production and consumption) whose activities are subordinated to the dictate of a predetermined *plan* (the play as overriding efficient purpose). Secondly, the assumption of the technological form of sports has lent it a technical *meaning* in the consciousness of sports fans. Hence, this technocratic meaning is transferred when political activity is described in the language of sports, leading us to (1) conceptualize political activity in purely instrumental terms, (2) justify political control by the technically competent elite, and (3) characterize long-range political decision-making as a planned activity—all factors which contribute to the internalization of the technocratic legitimating ideology. However,

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contemporary challenges to the form of sports by athletes raise the possibility of a change in the meaning of the sports metaphor which could give it a critical thrust in the future.

NEW GERMAN CRITIQUE, No. 4 (Winter 1975)

OSKAR NEGT, *"Ernst Bloch—The German Philosopher of the October Revolution."* This introduction to the following article affirms the status of Bloch as a significant Marxist political philosopher. Negt places the article in the contexts of both Bloch's own development and the political events of the period, demonstrating that Bloch functions as the conscience of the modern Left. ERNST BLOCH, *"A Jubilee for Renegades."* This revised reprint of a 1937 article addressing Russian emigres on the subject of the Moscow trials is a critique of those who would use the occasion to malign socialism in general. Bloch develops an extended analogy between the German renegade supporters of the French Revolution (Klopstock, Schiller) who deserted the cause of liberty after the Terror, and similar one-time supporters of the October Revolution who have become disenchanted with Stalin over the purges. Rather, like Goethe, Kant and Hegel, who remained sympathetic to the French Revolution even as they were critical of the Terror, Bloch feels that one must recognize the historical value of the Soviet Union even while admitting its inability to completely realize socialism. REINHARD KUEHNL, *"Problems of a Theory of German Fascism: A Critique of Dominant Interpretations."* The purpose of this article is the critical formulation of an adequate theory of the dialectical totality of the causes, conditions and characteristics of the German fascist movement in its rise to power. Kühnl feels that the proper understanding of fascism requires unifying historical and empirical material with the combined approaches of sociology, social psychology and political economy. With this approach Kühnl identifies six major aspects of German fascism: (1) its social basis in the petty bourgeois, pauperized in a crisis period of monopoly capital centralization aggravated by depression; (2) its political, economic and social aim of constructing an anti-labor, anti-industry authoritarian state for the protection of the middle class; (3) the ideological sources of public support (fear of property loss; anti-Semitic exteriorization of those fears) which permitted a contradiction between a propaganda which attacked both radical Marxism and monopoly capital, and a practice which in effect sided with capital against labor; (4) the internal Führer-structure of the fascist movement, which met needs rooted in (5) the authoritative-acquiescent attitudes developed in the general evolution of bourgeois society, and which were particularly emphasized in Germany; and (6) the political and military prerequisites for imperialist expansion. (See the discussion of Kühnl's work in Anson G. Rabinbach, "Towards a Marxist Theory of Fascism and National Socialism," *New German Critique,* No. 3, pp. 144-148.) EBERHARD KNOEDLER-BUNTE, *"The Proletarian Public Sphere and Political Organization: An Analysis of Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge's 'The Public Sphere and Experience'."* In this sympathetic presentation, Negt and Kluge are shown to have formulated in the category of "proletarian public sphere" a middle-level theory which confronts the qualitative transformation of capitalist social relationships from both the standpoint of new forms of production as well as from the standpoint of changes in everyday social experience. Developed in contrast to Habermas' *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* Negt and Kluge's formulation is an attempt to provide the foundation for the potential formation of class consciousness as a partisan consciousness of the social totality enriched by substantive vital interests. Transcending the constraints of exclusively theoretical or historical-empirical approaches to class consciousness and political organization by the reintroduction of an analytical context into the investigation, their approach reveals three dimensions of the interrelationship of elements of social experience: (1) the process by which the classical bourgeois public sphere is transformed into new public spheres of production; (2) the contradictory tendencies of cultural socialization cause a "block of real life"—a crisis in human psychic organization; (3) the intensification of this tendency by expanded forms of secondary exploitation in commodity production and mass media. Thus their formulation of the internal contradictions of the bourgeois public sphere in its modern sphere is superior to the "culture industry" analyses in that it develops a political position which can serve an important function in future organizational debates. ANDREAS HUYSSEN, *"The Cultural Politics of Pop: Reception and Critique of U.S. Pop Art in the Federal Republic of Germany."* In this article the theoretical issues behind the historical development of the process of German appropriation of U.S. Pop art are resolved into two contrasting positions, that of Adorno and Marcuse on the one hand, and that of Benjamin and Brecht on the other. Initially, Pop art was seen as essentially critical, a resolution of the crisis in bourgeois art; the ambiguous, conservative culture criticism of Adorno

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and Marcuse was a response to this development, colored in addition by the fact that Pop art's reception in Germany coincided with the anti-authoritarian revolt of the late 1960s. The cases of Duchamp and Warhol provide examples of the critical-affirmative problematic Pop represented; this aspect was emphasized in the German radical critiques advanced in 1968 which combined a conservative rejection of low art with an analysis of the ideological function of high art—giving rise to the conclusion of the impossibility of critical art in a manipulative culture. In contrast to this position, Benjamin and Brecht focuses on the task of changing culture by going beyond mere "consciousness raising" critical art; this was done by locating the dialectic of culture in the productivity of the artist, and the ambiguous nature of mass culture in artistic reproduction. However, revolutionary art became a truly material force only when complemented by collective praxis; hence the progressive nature of Pop when a part of the anti-authoritarian student movement, and its integration with the collapse of the student movement. Huyssen concludes by calling for a synthesis of the two positions; the preservation both of elements of theory and of Pop which can still be of use today could lead to a reaffirmation of the importance of aesthetics in the attempts to transform everyday life. FERENC FEHER, *"Negative Philosophy of Music—Positive Results."* Here Feher goes beneath the apparent differences in the Lukács-Adorno debate on art and shows to what extent both thinkers share the same cultural predisposition—the admiration for the art of the period marked by the flowering of the bourgeois individual. First of all, both thinkers deal almost exclusively with the period of the development and subsequent alienation of the autonomous artist (Shakespeare to Goethe; Bach to Beethoven). Secondly, both view the golden age of Realism as the period when socialized and liberated humanity raised life to the level of world history via the genuine totality of the work of art; in this world of the birth of dialectics, high and low culture are momentarily fused. Third, both have a similar theory of decadence in bourgeois art, and a corresponding blanket critique of the regressive character of modern art—with the notable exceptions of Viennese New Music for Adorno, and Socialist Realism for Lukács. Finally, their similar analyses of the reified, non-dialectical character of modern culture, coupled with elitist concerns with high culture led both thinkers to misunderstand significant contemporary artists (Bartok and Kafka); they did not comprehend that it is possible to have a single synthesis of method and conception that is both provincially exotic and also guided by world-historical considerations. BRIAN PETERSON, *"Worker's Councils in Germany, 1918-19: Recent Literature on the 'Rätebewegung'."* These recent examinations, the product of a group of sympathetic historians designated "the *Räte* school," are able to portray the actual history better than previous attempts because of their sympathetic attitude; however, they also share the illusions of the same period, that harmony between a bourgeois parliament and working class *Räte* was possible. Thus, this group of historians has indirectly shown the contradictions of parliamentary socialism in a revolutionary situation, and the necessity of proletarian dictatorship. JOHN KEANE, *"On Belaboring the Theory of Economic Crisis: A Reply to Laska."* Keane's reply to Laska's critique of Habermas ("A Note on Habermas and the Labor Theory of Value," *New German Critique*, No. 3) is twofold: (1) Laska's claim that Habermas is a Keynesian Revisionist misunderstands Habermas' attempts to effectively update Marx's own categories, and (2) Laska's claim that "true" scientific, revolutionary Marxism must continue to base itself on an economic crisis theory misses the significance of developments within capitalist societies since Marx's time. Habermas retains the connection between labor and value in positing two orders of productivity; but, while capitalism has been able to forestall the crisis in economic production through monopoly control of markets, technological increases in productivity, and an expansion of its commodity-market, it has developed a cultural crisis tendency from the process of state intervention--the crisis of legitimation. Thus, such an approach includes the values of an analysis of late capitalism's productive forces as well as an analysis of the interrelated institutions, power-relationships and ideologies necessary for a critical praxis-oriented understanding.

NEW LEFT REVIEW, Nos. 87-88 (September-December 1974)

ROBIN BLACKBURN, *"The Test in Portugal."* In this essay, Blackburn traces the roots of the *coup* of April 25, 1974 and the events in Portugal during the past year. JOHN BERGER, *"Directions in Hell."* Excerpted from the forthcoming book by Berger and Jean Mohr, *The Seventh Man*, this selection consists of impressionistic reflections on the lives of immigrant workers in Geneva. Berger presents an interesting comparison of the migrant worker with the prisoner, focusing on the effects of emigration or imprisonment upon the "individual life's time."

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ROY MEDVEDEV, *"What Lies Ahead for Us?"* This essay is the Soviet "dissident" historian's response to Solzhenitsyn's *Letter to Soviet Leaders*. Medvedev makes some interesting points, but the article is most revealing of the author's extremely vague critical position, which rests solely on the extension of democratic rights and opposition to bureaucracy, and avoids a critical confrontation of the production relations and structure of the USSR. THEODOR ADORNO, *"Commitment."* Sartre's *What Is Literature?* was the impetus for this brilliant essay. Adorno argues that works of art that attempt to take up a committed opposition to bourgeois society must necessarily fall victim to the same rationality which they intend to oppose. This essay contains a penetrating critique of Brecht's plays, which may not, however, invalidate the theoretical framework of the Brechtian project. Adorno's analysis will be important for both those who will want to push beyond the criticism of Brecht in order to reformulate Brecht's theory of "epic theater," as well as those who will wish to develop Adorno's theoretical support of Kafka and Beckett. This essay is perhaps best seen as a polemic with Walter Benjamin's *Understanding Brecht*. JON HALLIDAY, *"Hong Kong: Britain's Chinese Colony."* ERNEST MANDELL and BILL WARREN, *"Recession and its Consequences."* This is an excerpt from the transcript of a radio program broadcast in Australia, in which the participants give conflicting assessments of the current state of the world capitalist system and their prognostications of short- and long-term future developments. GORAN THERBORN, *"The Economic Theorists of Capitalism."* The main point of Therborn's article is that the claim to science on the part of political economy rests with its articulation of the mechanisms of a market society, and that the Marxist critique is and was centered on the historically specific moments of wage-labor and capital. The author is concerned with criticizing those efforts which have centered on the moment of value in political economy and the Marxist critique.

OUR GENERATION, Vol. 10, No. 3

THE EDITORS, *"The Montreal Citizen's Movement."* This is a brief history of the movement followed by a reprint of its manifesto. LINDA BRISKIN, *"Toward a Socialist Feminist Movement."* The ABC's of the origins, developments, middle-classification and factionalism of the women's movement are presented. The focus is on the Marxist feminists and their as yet futile search to ground their actions in some kind of socialist theory. Basic disagreements still remain on issues such as the family, the category of domestic labor and the strategy of wages for housework. This is followed by a reprint from *Socialist Revolution* that attempts to define "What Is Socialist Feminism?" Although the conceptualization of socialism was unspecified, hopefully it meant more than simply the 'public ownership of the means of production' which has proven to be a disastrous bureaucratic collectivism—as in the Soviet experience. JON TINKER, *"The Green-Bans in Australia."* This is an account of other than bread and butter issues tackled by the Builders' Labourers Federation in Australia under unionist secretary and conservationist Jack Mundey. "Green bans" were imposed by the union on projects deemed detrimental to the environment or to the interests of the local citizens. A number of interesting themes are mentioned but are never really developed—e.g., participatory democracy, environmental concern vs. full employment and the danger of bureaucracy. Some skeptics may ask if the success of the green bans was due more to a desire for a better quality of life or a building boom in Australia. EVE SMITH, *"Worker and Environment."* This is a disjointed, simplistic, schematic rallying-cry attempting to link the working class struggle to ecological issues. Higher wages make no sense in a totally polluted world. Since workers hold a key position in the production process, they can prevent much of the ecological degradation by bringing the wheels of industry to a standstill. By reducing production and consumption, says Smith, the capitalist hold can be weakened. Unfortunately this is easier said than done and the trends appear to be heading in the opposite direction. Workers in North America have shown themselves to be a reluctant revolutionary agent. And consumption, if anything, has become a way of life.

LA PENSEE, No. 177 (October 1974)

"La Crise de la Recherche Scientifique en France." Present-day occupational hazards of scientific research are the object of a round-table discussion and other assorted documents. Complaints concerning the subsumption of such research to the market needs of large corporations, political repression, lack of organizational democracy, lack of secure employment, cut-backs, etc., are voiced. ALBERT SOBOUL, *"L'Historiographie Classique de la Révolution Française."* The author identifies a "classical" tradition that includes the works of Barnave, Thiers, Tocqueville,

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Juarès, Lefebvre, and no doubt Soboul himself. On the basis of this tradition certain recent "revisionist" interpretations are criticized. Among the latter are included those that blur the specificity of the French Revolution by placing it in an "Atlantic" or "Western" framework (R.R. Palmer, J. Godechot); those that deny the anti-feudal and bourgeois character of the Revolution (A. Cobban, E. Eisenstein, G.V. Taylor); and those that deny the internal logic of the events by attempting to divorce the revolution of the popular classes from that of the "luminaries" (E. Faure, F. Furet and D. Richet). GEORGES LABICA, *"Marxisme et Spécificité."* If Marxist analysis is to avoid empiricism and schematism, it must recognize the specificity of different historical socio-economic formations. This lesson is illustrated by an analysis of Marx's, Engels' and Lenin's writings concerning the specific problems presented by the Russian situation with respect to the transition to socialism. ANTOINE BOUILLON, *"La Psychologie des Peuples: Croyance et Prédication."* The discpline of "ethno-psychology" is subjected to an epistemological and political critique. PIERRE ANGRAND, *"L'Administration de Beaux-Arts et L'Oeuvre de Daumier."* This is an historical essay concerning the artist's difficulties—both before and after his death—*vis-à-vis* the state's cultural apparatus.

LA PENSEE, No. 178 (December 1974)

JEAN BOUVIER, *"Capital Bancaire, Capital Industriel et Capital Financier dans la Croissance Française du XIXe Siècle."* The orthodox thesis of finance capital posits the fusion of banking and industrial capital (with the predominance of the former over the latter) during the imperialist stage at the turn of the century. Using France as a concrete example to test the methodological and theoretical ramifications of this thesis, the author discovers that finance capital only emerged after World War I—and even then, things were more complex than indicated by the theory. MARCOS WINOCUR, *"Le Rôle de la Classe Ouvrière dans la Révolution Cubain."* The mass struggles that finally led to the overthrow of the Batista regime are examined with special emphasis given to the role of the different sectors of the working class. BERNARD EDELMAN, *"Humanisme et Patrimonie."* Through an analysis of the writings of an obscure turn-of-the-century jurist (Hauriou), the author attempts to perceive in the bourgeois conception of property-rights an anthropological discourse, inscribed in the sphere of circulation, that envisages and formalizes a practice of the essence of man. Behind the immediate subject matter of this article lies a strictly Althusserian attack on the notion of the "subject" and "humanism." LOUIS PINTO, *"La Théorie de la Pratique."* This is an exegesis of P. Bourdieu's book *Esquisse d'une Théorie de la Pratique*. Structuralism is considered to be progressive, in that it breaks the tendency to identify the objectivity of the social with its lived representations, i.e., it isolates the structures that condition experience. However, it forgets that in reality social agents both produce these structures and give them meaning. In short, structuralism can see in social activity only a mysterious adjustment to pre-existing models. On the basis of this critique, Bourdieu attempts to conceptualize a theory of practice that corrects the deficiencies of structuralism without denying a system of objective relations. The key concept in this theory, that which mediates between practice and structure, is the "habitus." The latter is composed of two moments: the interiorization of the exterior and the exteriorization of the interior. And behind the habitus lie generative principles (a concept borrowed from Noam Chomsky) that situate that regularity which is the object of structuralism, not at the level of facts (modus operatum), but at the level of "engendering" practices (modus operandi). The argument is both difficult and dense, and goes much further than indicated here. JOSEPH BYA, *"La Publicité et sa Propagande."* The supposedly critical "metadiscourse" on advertising does not scientifically grasp the social significance of its object. Instead it provides a cultural appreciation equals middle class ideology equals a legitimation of capital. More equations: communication equals knowledge equals humanism equals bourgeois democracy. More Althusser.

POLITICAL THEORY, Vol. 2, No. 4 (November 1974)

ALLAN BLOOM, *"Leo Strauss, September 20, 1899—October 18, 1973."* Written for the second commemoration of Strauss' death, this memorial, by one of his well known disciples, incisively surveys the evolution of his thought. MARK POSTER, *"Althusser on History Without Man."* Though the development of Althusser's structuralist Marxism is presented, this essay is concerned with his conception of history as social change devoid of the deliberate actions of human agents. The notion of Althusser as a positivist is rejected and he is seen to have raised some significant questions for philosophers of history and practicing historians; most notably:

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What is the object of historical inquiry? MARK HULLING, *"Patriarchalism and its Early Enemies."* The roots of patriarchalism and its rejection by both modern absolutists and liberal constitutionalists is presented by an examination of the writings of Freud, Bodin, Bossuet and Filmer, Locke and Montesquie. B.A. HADDOCK, *"The History of Ideas and the Study of Politics."* ANN CONGELTON, *"Two Kinds of Lawlessness: Plato's Crito."* With a more scrupulous examination of the character and role of Crito, rather than Socrates, this commentary suggests that between the higher lawlessness represented in the *Apology*, and the lower lawlessness of the *Crito*, there can be located the realm of human law.

PRAXIS (Zagreb), Nos. 1-2 (1974)

Theme of Issue: *The Bourgeois World and Socialism*

RUDI SUPEK, *"Dix ans de l'Ecole d'été de Korcula [1963-1973]."* An inaugural address which outlines the history and thrust of the Korcula summer schools. ERNST BLOCH, *"Die bürgerliche Welt und der Sozialismus."* PREDRAG VRANICKI, *"Le Monde Bourgeois et le Socialisme."* This attempts a discussion of the goals of socialist revolution understood as a dialectical transcendence of bourgeois social relations. VELJKO KORAC, *"Aporiae of the Bourgeois Society and the Postulate for Human Emancipation."* Against middle class society's self-image as the truly rational core of modern society is pitted the vision of humanism and de-reification. JUERGEN HABERMAS, *"Die Rolle der Philosophie im Marxismus."* The revolutionary *Aufhebung* of capitalist society has been understood by Marxists as the preservation, liberation and development of the productive forces of the bourgeois world, and the revolutionizing of its productive relations. This leads to the question: is philosophy a productive force or is it, rather, false consciousness? This question is considered in the context of (a) the changed constellations of bourgeois culture in late capitalism (the decline of religious consciousness, the cynicism of bourgeois sytems of morality, the critical potentials of art); and (b) the growth and dominance of scientism, and the philosophic reactions which it has produced (complementary philosophies, e.g., existentialism; Heideggerian *Ursprungsphilosophie*; and Soviet Marxism). Philosophy, rooted in late capitalism and understood in the sense of radical self-reflection against objectivism and ideology, is thus the irreplaceable regent to a claim to unity and generalization: "Whoever abolishes philosophy abolishes an element of the bourgeois world, whose inheritance we cannot renounce without damaging the sciences themselves." GAJO PETROVIĆ, *"Philosophie und Sozialismus—Wiederaufnahme einer Diskussion."* LUCIO LOMBARDO RADICE, *"Philosophie et Politique dans la pensée Marxiste Italienne."* IVAN KUVAĆIĆ, *"Die Analyse der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft von Marx und die Konvergenz-Theorie."* MIHAILO MARKOVIĆ, *"Basic Issues of Self-Management."* The idea of self-management is inseparable from the notion of *self-determination* which, in practice, must satisfy four basic conditions: (a) coordination of social processes is to be decentralized; (b) reliable knowledge of social processes must be at hand; (c) open dialogue and communication must take place; and (d) continual attempts to discover the "true self" of the community must be made. IVAN VARGA, *"Possibilities and Limits of the Capitalist and of the Socialist World."* SRDAN VRCAN, *"Social Equality and Inequality in the Bourgeois World and in Socialism: Challenge and Alternative."* SVETOZAR STOJANOVIC, *"Stalinist 'Partiinost' and Communist Dignity."* Marx's "categorical imperative" that all conditions must be revolutionized in which man is a debased, an enslaved, an abandoned, a contemptible being must apply to the communists themselves. JEAN-MICHEL PALMIER, *"Marxisme soviétique et marxisme occidental: quelques remarques sur l'histoire des rapports entre philosophie et marxisme."* STEFAN MORAWSKI, *"Censorship Versus Art."* DANKO GRLIĆ, *"Gibt es eine bürgerliche und eine Sozialistische Kunst?"* ABRAHAM EDEL, *"Technology and Morality."* MICHAEL MACCOBY, *"Who Creates New Technology and Why."* PAUL BROCKELMAN, "Education and Post-Industrial *Society."* WILLIAM McBRIDE, *"Intellectual Productivity in Capitalist and Post-Capitalist Societies."* HEINZ BRANDT, *"Voran zur Natur, zur Selbstverwicklichung und gesellschaftlichen Selbstorganisation des Menschen."*

RADICAL PHILOSOPHY, Vol. 9 (Winter 1974)

"Swansea: The Story So Far." Centering around the opposition to trade unionism and the dismissal of two lecturers, the conflict between the philosophy department and the administration at the University College of Swansea is reviewed. ANDREW COLLIER, *"The Production of Moral Ideology."* The nature of ideology, its origin and function, is examined in

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terms of psychoanalytical theory and Marxism. The characteristics and social function of moral ideologies in relation to the specific requirements of capitalist society are also considered. A prognosis for the dissolution of moral ideology in a socialist society is presented in the conclusion. GRAHAM WHITE, *"The Significance of Yves Klein's 'Rituals'."* An examination of the concepts implicitly questioned by the "Ritual for the Relinquishment of the Immaterial Pictoral Sensitivity Zones" whose author is described as the most outstanding and innovating of the Neo-Dadaists. ALFRED GELL, *"Understanding the Occult."* This sketch of the general form of the occult is intended to understand how it exists as an integral element in human affairs and claims for its adherents a measure of control over the contingencies which surround people in the course of their daily lives. TED BENTON, *"Ranciere and Ideology."* This set of notes is intended as potential discussion points for the issues raised by Jacque Ranciere in his critique of Althusser, "On the Theory of Ideology," which appeared in volume seven of this journal.

RADICAL AMERICA, Vol. 8, No. 6 (November-December 1974)

EDITORIAL STATEMENT, *"Racism and Busing in Boston."* This history of racism in Boston centers around the struggle to establish improved educational opportunities, and posits busing as the most recent manifestation of that racism. GUIDO VIALE, *"Class Struggle and European Unity."* Reviewing the problems Italy has faced establishing working class unity, this translation from Lotta Continua urges the whole of Europe to learn from the Italian experience. STEPHEN CASTLES and GODULA KOSACK, *"Immigrant Workers and Trade Unions in the German Federal Republic."* The problems that are created for the trade union leadership by the increased militancy of immigrant workers are examined in connection with the function that the employment of these workers has for West German capitalism and the trade unions. A description of the actual policy of the unions since the beginning of the recruitment of the foreign labor and the possible reactions of immigrant workers towards trade union policy is also considered. PETER RACHLEFF, *"Soviets and Factory Committees in the Russian Revolution."* As opposed to the multitude of books and articles on the Russian Revolution which focus on the activities of the parties and prominent individuals, this article analyzes the activities of the working class in two kinds of organizations—soviets and factory committees.

RADICAL SCIENCE JOURNAL, Nos. 2-3 (December 1974)

GARY WERSKEY, *"Making Socialists of Scientists."* An extended paper on the scientists' movement of the 1930s, and a discussion of the Roses' influential essay, "The Radicalization of Science." ALFRED SOHN-RETHEL, *Science as Alienated Consciousness."* The concept of inertial motion as an exemplar for the thesis that all scientific ideas reflect social relations. SHEILA YOUNG, *"The Politics of Abortion."* Abortion under the NHS is seen as a case of the structural oppression of women by the medical profession. DAVID DICKSON, *"Science and Society: The BAAS Con-trick."* BRIAN HURWITZ, *"Liberation and the Aims of Science."* This is an extended review of Brian Easlea's recent book.

REVIEW OF AFRICAN POLITICAL ECONOMY, No. 1 (Aug.-Nov. 1974)

SAMIR AMIN, *"Accumulation and Development: a Theoretical Model."* The core of Amin's model of the global accumulation of capital is outlined. Two distinct patterns are defined: one applying to development at the center, the other to dependent development in the periphery. Central development is characterized by the dominance of economic activity to satisfy mass consumer needs and the consequent demand for production goods. The power of the masses is enlisted in a "social contract" which allows the establishment of a limited economic viability at a national level. However, the internationalization of productive capital increasingly threatens that stability. The peripheral systems are dominated by production of luxury goods and exports and the consequent lack of importance of internal mass markets. This leads to growing inequality, technological dependence, political weakness among the opporessed—in sum, marginalization. Restructuring of these economies requires a break with the international economy, and self-centered development which establishes the dominance of production for mass needs, though there are particular difficulties for individual countries attempting such a break. Ultimately a solution can be found only if such changes take place internationally. Policies for the difficult period of transition must first and foremost focus on the need to build the social consciousness necessary to complete this process. CLAUDE MEILLASSOUX, *"Development or Exploitation: Is the Sahel Famine Good Business?"* If the drought can be seen as an act of nature, the same

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cannot be said for the famine, which is largely the result of a policy of agricultural exploitation carried out for the benefit of the great powers in Sahel. This famine crudely reveals that what is called development or aid is nothing other than a policy of exploitation. Furthermore, this famine offers the opportunity for a radical transformation of the traditional modes of agricultural production, promoting the establishment of a highly productive system of capitalist agriculture that is not only oriented towards the satisfaction of industrial needs, but also capable of supplying food to capitalist countries. LIONEL CLIFFE, *"Capitalism or Feudalism? The Famine in Ethiopia."* This famine, as in the Sahel, is not simply a natural disaster but has social and economic origins. Moreover, the suffering is not simply the compounding of the effects of food shortage by the harsh burdens borne by tenant farmers. While southern Ethiopia, where famine is now beginning to strike, had a feudal land system imposed in the nineteenth century, the northern provinces where the famine first hit has a system where there were lords of the land—but no landlords and peasants had the security of access to the land even though they paid "titles." The commercialization and mechanization of agriculture in the last generation has eroded those rights. Landlords are becoming capitalist farmers and a landless class is growing. The famine is accelerating these process, just as it is exacerbated by them. JOHN SAUL, *"African Peasants and Revolution."* Are peasants like a "sack of potatoes" (Marx), divided and demoralized, or can they become a revolutionary force? While most of the world's oppressed are peasants and their discontent generates the "steam of revolution," a "piston box" is needed to transform it into power. This may be provided either by forms of extraordinary and direct oppression or by organization and political leadership. In practice it will almost always require both. Saul examines the range of peasantries in Africa and, using the contrasting experiences of Mozambique and Tanzania, discusses the methods and circumstances which may transform peasantries into the mass base of revolutions. *"Briefings."* Includes short pieces on *"Portugal and Africa: after the Lisbon Coup;" "Statement by Frelimo Executive Committee on the Events in Portugal;" "Race and Class. Radical Africana."* An excellent and comprehensive bibliography of radical African scholarship, in both French and English.

REVIEW OF RADICAL POLITICAL ECONOMICS, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Fall 1974)

JAMES CYPHER, *"Capitalist Planning and Military Expenditures."* This article maintains that the regulation of military expenditures is the major device used to offset the tendency towards "secular stagnation" and to control "political business cycles." At the end of the article it is suggested that there is some evidence of a switch from covert planning (e.g., military expenditures) to overt planning (e.g., wage and price controls) but the idea is not pursued. AL SZYMANSKI, *"Marxist Theory and International Capital Flows."* Classical Marxist theory (Marx, Lenin, Luxemburg) posits a net export of capital from developed to underdeveloped countries, while neo-Marxist theory (Baran, A.G. Frank) posits a net import of capital. The author constructs eight measures in order to test these divergent hypotheses. Using American data (1950-1971), he concludes that the classical theory is the more correct if one excludes the years 1968-1971. The latter years are considered atypical, given the restrictions on foreign investment due to concern with the balance of payments deficit. In fact, the balance of payments problem is seen, in part, as an expression of tendencies perceived by the classical theory. THOMAS WEISSKOPF, *"Theories of American Imperialism: A Critical Evaluation."* The author lists eight possible sources of imperialism, some based on the interests of the nation, some based on the interests of class. Of these eight sources the majority of them can be related to capitalism, and can be applied to the present-day situation of the USA. DANIEL LURIA, *"Subjectivity and Dialectical Materialism."* This is a polemic against those fragments of the "left" that have retreated into the inner world of the counter-culture, communes, mysticism, and other assorted forms of subjectivism. The author argues that people attempt to resolve the subject-object split in bourgeois society by a flight into pure subjectivity. Given the disastrous consequences of such a one-sided consciousness, the left must provide a materialist counter-weight. RON STANFIELD, *"A Revision of the Economic Surplus Concept."* This article attempts to defend and quantify the early Baran's concept of the potential economic surplus (found in *The Political Economy of Growth*). MICHAEL PERELMAN, *"An Application of Marxian Theory to Environmental Economics."* The search for profit results in the depletion of natural resources, given the fact that the costs of extracting such resources are much lower than the costs of their reproduction.

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REVOLUTIONARY WORLD, Vol. 3 (1973)

SHINGO SHIBATA. *"The 'Variety' Within Marxist Philosophy and Philosophical Questions of Democracy."* This translation from the Japanese concentrates on the various international developments of the practice and philosophy of Marxism. ION BANU, *"The Graphic Figure and the Philosophical Abstraction."* This examination of an early moment in the universal abstract stage of ancient Chinese philosophy considers the function of various graphic geometric designs in terms of philosophic abstractions (in distinction from the common sense abstractions usually expressed by ideograms). DAVID H. DEGROOD, *"Aspects of the Modern Dialectic."* Concerned with the dialectics of bourgeois society and its intelligentsia, this essay is directed to the organizers of radical and revolutionary movements in the West and their opposition to fascism and neo-fascism. IGOR HRUSOVSKY, *"Being and Structure."* A German translation examining the dialectical relationship between being and structure, and its connection with the concept of praxis. PAUL LAFARGUE, *"From Animism to Bourgeoisdom."* Originally published as a book entitled *Social and Philosophical Studies*, this is the first of a series of articles to appear in successive issues of this journal. *"The Origin of Abstract Ideas: Inquiries into the Origin of the Idea of Justice and the Idea of Goodness"* is also included in this issue. FRIEDRICH ENGELS, *"Letter to J. Bloch."* Written in September, 1890, this letter criticizes the economic determinist interpretation of historical materialism prevalent at that time.

THE SECOND WAVE, Vol. 3, No. 4 (Spring 1974)

"From Us." In a statement on editorial policy, the staff of *The Second Wave* announces its intention to develop clearer political commitments which will grow out of and be reflected in editorial decisions. They admit that the journal has promoted writing about and concern for women without being fully conscious of its radical political origins and goals. The immediacy of the current world situation compels this self-reflection and redefinition. GAYLE DODSON LE TOURNEAU and ANNETTE TOWNLEY, *"Transformation in the Politics of Aesthetics."* Two organizers of the first National Women's Poetry Festival at the University of Massachusetts in March 1974 talk about their experiences in planning the festival. The most important outcome of the poetry week was the demystification of poets as famous people: gatherings in which celebrities and average people can interact naturally and personally are able to suggest alternatives to powerlessness and inferiority. The politicization of aesthetics is possible through feminist poetry's crystallization of the experience of oppression, the unifying nature of art and its power to move people to action. ALTA, *"i am a mother."* TANIS WALTER and EDIE BLACK, *"Hunters and Gatherers."* The authors aim to review the anthropological generalizations about male and female status in hunting and gathering societies. They suggest that the division of labor was not as rigid as anthropology maintains and that women's economic function was objectively important to the supply of food and subjectively satisfying because of the relationships with other women developed while gathering. On the one hand, sexual bias in anthropological research has undoubtedly distorted our knowledge of the role and status of women. On the other, however, it is false and unnecessary to attempt to prove in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, women's historical equality in order to assert the goal and the possibility of future equality. LYNDA WIGGINS, *"Abandoned Memoirs."* FRAN TAYLOR, *"A Depressing Discourse on Romance, the Individual Solution and Related Misfortunes."* Taylor criticizes the attempt to find personal happiness within a marriage, family, career or above subsistence standard of living. Only with fundamental socio-economic change can solutions be found to the problem of personal life. Her analysis presents a false dichotomy of love and work, is biased towards those whose education and cultural inclination even raises the question of choice in these matters, and fails to examine her own assumption: the work of social change is in many ways antithetical to love and personal fulfillment. LUCY LEU interviews MICHIMI, *"Women in Japan."*

THE SOCIALIST REGISTER (1974)

LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI, *"My Correct Views on Everything."* Kolakowski's answer to E.P. Thompson's open letter (see *Socialist Register* 1973) evokes an analogy with the later writings of Adorno and Horkheimer. Written in the spirit of critical pessimism, Kolakowski's views raise legitimate problems regarding essential aspects of Marxist theory and socialist practice. The form in which they are presented is not every lucid and subsequently borders on over-generalization. Kolakowski's views, notwithstanding their formal weaknesses and the conservative aftertaste,

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require a serious attention. ROSSANA ROSSANDA, *"Revolutionary Intellectuals and the Soviet Union."* In this essay, which appeared originally in *Les Temps Modernes* and *Kursbuch* and was written in 1972, one of the central figures of the *Manifesto* group in Italy confronts the problematical relationship of Western intellectuals to the USSR and China. Through an exploration of the positions taken by Sartre, Nizan, Ernst Fischer, and Merleau-Ponty, Rossanda outlines the inability or unwillingness of Western intellectuals to come to terms with the internal structure of social relations in the USSR in favor of "superstructural" analyses of the development of socialism. The author argues for an analysis which explicates the areas in which capitalist social relations and rationality are still existant and reproduced. According to Rossanda, this kind of approach is necessary if the European left is to develop a consistent relationship to the Soviet Union and China. JEAN-MARIE CHAUVIER, *"Solzhenitsyn: A Political Analysis."* Solzhenitsyn's social and political ideas are being typologized and put into an historical perspective through the use of the "balance-sheet" method. The article, although sometimes lacking deeper theoretical elaboration, contains many interesting insights into the contemporary Soviet reality. HAL DRAPER, *"Marx on Democratic Forms of Government."* A chapter from Draper's forthcoming book entitled *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution*, this selection seeks to show, primarily through excerpts from newspaper articles from 1848-49, that Marx's socialism consisted, on a political level, of the complete democratization of society as a whole and the subordination of the state to society. ALASTAIR DAVIDSON, *"Gramsci and Lenin 1917-22."* This essay, which utilizes material from Davidson's upcoming book, *The Young Gramsci: Towards an Intellectual Biography*, marks an important contribution to the literature available in English on Gramsci. It is flawed by the author's structuralist approach, which leads him to look for a "rupture" in Gramsci's thought, and to a forced "reading" of Lenin. WINTON HIGGINS, *"Reconstructing Australian Communism."* Higgins traces the background to the 1971 split within the Communist Party of Australia and subsequent developments, including the growth of an Althusserian current among Party intellectuals and their journal, *The Australian Left Review*. RAOUL MAKARIUS, *"Structuralism—Science or Ideology."* An extremely hostile attack on the anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss, in which Makarius accuses him of obscurantism and of playing an ideologically reactionary role. JOHN SAVILLE, *"Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution."* This is a review-essay of the book of the same title by John Foster. RICHARD HYMAN, *"Workers' Control and Revolutionary Theory."* This is an informative account of the activities of the Institute for Workers' Control in Great Britain. WALTER GOLDSTEIN, *"The Multi-National Corporation: A Challenge to Contemporary Socialism."* In this essay, Goldstein argues that the multi-nationals have effectively created a situation in which socialization of the economy of one nation in the West is now impossible, because the nationalization of multi-nationals would cripple a nation in respect to world trade. The editors of the *Socialist Register* have explicitly rejected this conclusion, which is arrived at via a very narrow, economistically conceived notion of socialism. V.G. KIERNAN, *"American Hegemony under Revision."* In this essay, Kiernan discusses some of the changes in the international situation during the past 15 years which have altered U.S. foreign policy, and which he feels hold out the hope of a pacification of the U.S.'s actions. GEORGE ROSS, *"The Second Coming of Daniel Bell."* This is a review-essay of Bell's latest book, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*. JOHN S. SAUL, *"The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Tanzania."* Saul uses recent trends in Tanzania to continue the work of Hamza Alavi on "post-colonial" political development.

SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, No. 20 (October 1974)

STANLEY ARONOWITZ, *"Food, Shelter and the American Dream."* With the economic squeeze between inflation and unemployment and disillusionment caused by the war in Vietnam and the Watergate scandal, Aronowitz notes a growing crisis in the ideological basis of American capitalism and legitimacy. This is further complicated by the increasing scarcity of consumer goods because of the growing organic composition of capital which results in a shift of capital investment to other sectors which are more labor intensive. As a result of all this there is the growing potential for oppositional movement developing, especially among youth, the public sector, and around issues relating to the type of technology used to obtain energy. DAVID VOGEL, *"Corporations and the Left."* Develops the bind which corporations confront when they attempt to counter criticisms made by the left that private ownership is obsolete. The typical apologetic response is that the corporation functions as the arbitrator between the various groups

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in society. Yet this merely begs the question: why do private corporations and not society as a whole have this 'right?' MINA DAVIS CAULFIELD, *"Imperialism, the Family, and Cultures of Resistance."* An interesting article which notes the impact imperialism has on the family and the role the latter plays as a basis of opposition to imperialism. Imperialism breaks down the homogeneity of the peasant-based family, allowing new forms of male domination to develop based on the capitalist division of labor. On the other hand, the attempt to maintain the peasant family with its norms and social organization has a critical function since it is in opposition to the new forms introduced by imperialism. ARTHUR MacEWAN, *"Equality and Power in Revolutionary Cuba."* Discusses the use of collective incentives in Cuba. According to the author they help create the basis for democratic socialism because they encourage an equal distribution of wealth and a broader knowledge of economic and political questions.

SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, Nos. 21-22 (January 1974)

ELI ZARETSKY, *"Male Supremacy and the Unconscious."* This begins with a brief summary of the negative attitude of the Feminist movement toward the work of Freud. From here he points toward Juliet Mitchell's path-breaking work which attempts to incorporate Freudianism within Marxism via Althusser's notion of "science." Drawing on Mitchell's novel interpretation, Zaretsky goes on to show the relevance of Freud, especially his theory of psychoanalysis which makes an understanding of sexism in its depth dimension possible. *Selections from the Australian Communist Party:* ERIC AARONS, *"The Nature of Soviet Society Today."* Aarons notes some of the reasons why Russia failed to realize the image of socialism developed by Marx. Coming into existence at a time when it was imperative that centralized control be maintained in the face of international opposition, Aarons says that the reasons justifying Russian socialism have long since become obsolete. As a consequence of the entrenchment of bureaucracy, social forms (e.g., soviets) which could begin the movement toward a truly socialist society have been discouraged. This in turn has also led to a cultural domination which prevents the free flow of ideas. BERNIE TAFT, *"The Leninist Party."* In response to the dismissal of the Leninist theory of the party for authoritarianism, Taft shows how Lenin's theory actually operated within the party. Taft pulls in much material: from *What Is to Be Done?* and Lenin's dismissal of the text five years later, to the 1917 revolution and the institution of absolute control of the party in 1922. CARL BOGGS, BRUCE DANCIS, and MICHAEL ROTKIN, *"Comment on Taft's 'The Leninist Party'."* The authors criticize Taft for focusing too much on Lenin's personal role in the party and not enough on the character of the party itself. MICHAEL P. LERNER, *"How to Put Socialism on the Agenda."* The argument here is for a mass-based socialist party which would make people view socialism as a real alternative.

LES TEMPS MODERNES, No. 339 (October 1974)

JACQUES LIZOT, *"Histoire indiennes d'amour."* An episode in the sexual life of the Yanomami Indians. EVELINE PINTO, *" 'La névrose objective' chez Sartre."* An analysis of Sartre's conception, in the first book of volume III of his work on Flaubert, of the "objective neurosis," that socio-cultural malady which prevented the French writer after 1848 from realizing himself except through the unreality of an imaginary which takes art as the Absolute. SANTIAGO BARRIOS, *"La 'Restauration' au Chili."* A study of the political economy of the junta during the first ten months after the coup. The economic policy of the junta must be understood in light of its political aim of maintaining power. CELSO FURTADO, *"Sous-développement et dépendance."* Underdevelopment, a consequence of the growth of capitalism, takes the form of a social inequality within the dependent country. An increase in the rate of economic growth, therefore, will not reduce underdevelopment but rather render it more critical by increasing this social inequality.

LES TEMPS MODERNES, No. 340 (November 1974)

Theme: Normalisation de l'école: scolarisation de la societé.

JEANNETTE COLOMBEL, *"Presentation: 'Les murs de l'école'."* Althusser's definition of the function of schools is too abstract; the ideological content of the apparatus is lodged in its hierarchical structures such that it constricts the very "desire to know." The object of the issue on education is to provide testimonies, documents and analyses directed toward—following Illich here—the "deschooling" of society. *La Répression:* ISAAC JOSEPH, *"Les trois enfermements."*

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An account of the repressive conception of the functions of prisons, mental hospitals and schools at the dawn of bourgeois society in the works of the original "idéologues" (Destutt de Tracy, etc.). JEAN BOUVIER, *"Sur la répression dans l'enseignement."* Introduction to a brochure of the "committee against repression in teaching." *"Déclaration des élèves de Brie-Comte-Robert."* JEAN-LUC HENNIG, *"Coup d'état à Nantua."* Personal account by a suspended lycée teacher of his struggle with the "mafia des notables" in a small town. BERNARD DELCROS, *"Muté puis suspendu."* Another teacher reports on his suspension from a vocational secondary school. ANNIE LE GREVELLEC, *"On enseigne ce que l'on est."* The case of a teacher trainee rejected for certification on account of "insolence." RENE LOURAU, *"La bataille de Poitiers."* A self-defense by the director of the sociology department at the University of Poitiers which had been placed under tutelage by the administration for experimental "collective" evaluation procedures. *La Normalisation.* PAUL ROZENBERG, *"La normalisation et les modalités du refus."* An evocation of the ongoing "implosion" of discontent among students. RENE SCHERER, *"Noli tangere."* On the sterilizing effects of the taboo on physical contact and the sources of creativity in passion. MAUD MANNONI, *"Les exclus."* Inadaptation in education is viewed as a symptom which puts into question a whole style of life; a call for the integration of the school into community life and the "destruction of the myth of infancy." *"La rêve de Sylvie."* Dream of a 15-year-old girl. GUY HOCQUENGHEM, *"L'enfance d'un sexe."* Comments on books by Duvert and Schérer on sexual education. SIMONE, *"Educatrices, 'toujoures prêtes'?"* Group discussion of mothers discontented with the education of their children. DANIELLE DURIS, *"Moi, le 10%."* On the hassles of promoting cultural education in a technical school. BRUNO, *"Le lycée où on s'emmerde."* Testimony of a secondary student. PIERRICK CLOAREC, *"Quelle(s) issues(s) pour le mouvement lycéen?"* Discussion of the political strategy of the lycée students. *Le Contenu de l'Enseignement.* DENISE FEDIDA and RACHEL DESCHAMPS, *"Belles lettres ou lettres anonymes."* Critique of the teaching of French and a plea for reforms which would direct attention toward oral language; reading non-literary texts and the cultivation of creative expression. MICHEL MANGEMATIN, *"Les mathématiques dans le second degré."* On the ideological aspects of current math training. *La Formation Permanente et la Hiérarchisation.* PIERRE CLEMENT, *"La formation de la force de travail."* On the contradictory aspects of diploma certification as both a mode of skill enhancement and hierarchization. PHILIPPE FRITSCH, *"L'imposture de la 'solution-formation'."* An account of the aspects of the labor conflicts at the Salamander shoe factory in Romans. ANDRE GORZ, *"Le programme caché de l'éducation permanente."* A characterization of the functions of "schooled apprenticeship" in creating a docile labor force and a plea for a reorganization of the division of labor which would allow continuing education to fulfill the needs of workers. G. BENDRIHEM, *"Pennaroya: le médecin nous a aidé."* A report on a notable victory for industrial health in a lead-poisoning case. MICHEL FONTAINE, *"Des étudiants en quête de paysans."* A discussion on the difficulties of carrying out reforms in veterinary education. *Chroniques.* "Le sexisme dans *les manuels scolaires.*" Survey of sex stereotyping in French school books carried out by the league for the rights of women. RENEE SAUREL, *"Contre le chant funèbre, pour un théâtre de vie."* A review of the opera "Une lettre pour la reine Victoria" by Robert Wilson and the book *La mise en théâtre* by Marchel Maréchal. CHRISTIAN ZIMMER, *"Les perdants de l'été."* Brief reviews of a number of films shown in the "off" summer season in Paris.

TERZO MONDO, Vol. 7, No. 26 (December 1974)

DANIEL VIDART, *"Antropologia della Fame."* A critical evaluation of several theories dealing with the problem of hunger on a world-wide scale. Neo-Malthusian views are harshly attacked, while alternative socio-political interpretations are shown to be considerably more adequate. ANTONIO CARLO, *"Le Radici Strutturali della Politica Sovietica di Coesistenza."* This is a follow-up of Carlo's earlier article on the USSR (cf. *Telos* 21). Here, Soviet foreign policy is analyzed in terms of the structural contradictions of the Russian bureaucratic collectivist regime seen as "the historical crisis of Soviet bureaucracy." On the whole, the USSR's foreign policy of peaceful coexistence is seen as an attempt to remedy the most glaring shortcomings of Soviet internal economic policies. TULLO VIGEVANI, *"La Politica Estera del Brasile: Il Modello vuole Espandersi."* A scrutiny of Brazil's foreign policy and its impact in Latin America, Africa and the Third World in general. Notwithstanding the successes in Brazil, the author concludes that on the whole, things are deteriorating from the viewpoint of North American imperialist

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interests. HORACIO VAZQUEZ RIAL, *"Commenti sulla Preparazioni Militare del Brasile."* A statistical study of Brazil's military preparedness. GIAN CARLO COSTADONI, *"Azione e Contradizione della Chiesa in Brasile."* A comparison of the doctrines and functions of the Church in Brazil. *Special Section on the Condition of Women in the Third World.* A section of three articles dealing with the conditions of women in the Portuguese colonies, Bangladesh, plus a translation of Diane Schulder and Florence Kennedy's critique of the U.S. Black Movement's position on abortion and Women's Liberation. GIGLIOLA LANDUCCI, *"Dipendenza Scientifica e Condizionamento Technologico in America Latina."* A study of educational policies in Latin America. *"Missione e Sottomissione. Considerazioni Critiche sull'Attività Missionaria in Ecuador."* A report by a group of missionaries in Ecuador outlining the phasing out of such efforts as a result of socio-economic developments in Third World countries, and the growing impact of the "theology of liberation" which rediscovers indigenous religious traditions and directs them in progressive political projects.

THEORY AND SOCIETY, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring 1975)

S. MICHAEL MILLER, *"Notes on Neo-Capitalism."* With the growing amount of literature concerning the structural changes in capitalism, the author attempts a grand synthesis of the various contributions. Most important are the changes introduced by means of the corporation for particular capitals to 'self-consciously' plan the reproduction process and the role of state intervention in averting crisis. DEREK L. PHILLIPS, *"Paradigms and Incommensurability."* Discussion of the work of Kuhn which notes a continuity with Wittgenstein. The author concludes that Kuhn has no idea of self-reflection at the meta-theoretical level and is therefore caught in the antinomy of relativism-objectivism, just as the latter development of Wittgenstein's theory disclosed. JOHN W. BENNETT, *"Communes and Communitarianism."* Provides an historical remembrance of the roots to the communal movement of the 60s which seems to have sprung from nowhere. Beginning with the early Christian movements, to the Owenite communities of the 19th century, and finally the contemporary Kibbutz, the author briefly traces the development of this theme. MICHAEL CLARKE, *"Survival in the Field: Implications of Personal Experience in Field Work."* An examination of the relations between researchers and the objects which they attempt to understand. Positivism assumes, according to the author, that this is merely a problem with the various techniques used to obtain and interpret data. Yet this approach fails to realize both the inherent instrumentality contained in their techniques and the consequences this has for the relation between the field worker and the object studied. The author recommends a reintegration of the themes developed by the hermeneutic tradition which take account of the subject-object relation in research.

WOMEN: A JOURNAL OF LIBERATION, Vol. 3, No. 4 (1974)

MARGARET RANDALL, *"Women in the Cuban Revolution."* The author summarizes the triumphs and problems of the liberation of Cuban women. The socialized services presently available are not adequate to meet the needs of all women who want to leave the home to work; a key question is whether Cuba's economy can develop rapidly enough to invest the huge amounts in social services that are required. In the last few years ideological questions of women's emancipation have received increasing attention. These include the problems of sex-typed curriculum in schools, the need for encouragement of women to raise their cultural, political and technological levels, the need for the development of male responsibility for home and children and the need to change traditional notions of female role and temperament. This article by the author of *Cuban Women Now* gives a very accurate presentation not only of the situation of Cuban women but also of the conceptual framework within which the woman question is treated by the Cubans themselves. JENNIFER ARTHUR, *"Spanish Women."* The author discusses problems and concerns of the women's movement and barriers to political action that the policies of Spain's fascist government erects. In a country where the women's movement by necessity must be underground, the critique of the position of women is inseparable from opposition to the state. However, the Madrid women's organization discussed in the article has developed apart from the illegal worker's movements and parties and *Comisione Obreras*, the illegal rank and file movement. These are criticized for their male chauvinism and relegation of women to secondary positions. LINDA GORDON, *"The Fourth Mountain."* A look at women's liberation in China from the standpoint of their own concepts. Two main features of female emancipation are (1) it is

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brought about by the general progress of society and (2) it is a process. Gordon then uses the Chinese experience to critique Western feminist notions. Finally, the author discusses prospects for women in China. She speculates that full emancipation will eventually entail a self-conscious campaign rather than occuring through the gradual process of equalization of the sexes now underway. GUADALUPE VALDES FALLIS, *"The Liberated Chicana—A Struggle Against Tradition."* In a short article the author challenges the idealization of the traditional oppression of women by nationalist Chicano males. She argues that uncritical reappropriation of cultural heritage and identity serves to maintain an oppressive status quo for women. Those women who defy this reactionary nationalism are taunted with the label "gringa." Hence, there has been no means for Chicana women to immanently critique ideas of male-female relations, female role, etc. From this it is a short jump to the view of the Chicano male as the main oppressor. Here the author confuses the immediacy of oppression by the Chicano male with the essence of oppression. She fails to address this larger question and from this follow conclusions of a separatist movement of women, blindness to ways in which Chicano males experience exploitation and oppression and the renunciation of anti-capitalist struggle. At the same time, her expression is an important moment in the discovery of oppression in heretofore accepted realities of everyday life. WOMEN FOR IRISH FREEDOM, *"The Fighting Women of Ireland."* CHRISTINA ADACHI, *"Nisei Women Speak!"* Recent articles by Asian-American women show intelligent reflection upon their own experiences in the context of World War II and U.S. involvement in Indo-china that has produced a sensitive understanding of the interrelation of racism, sexism and imperialism. This article is one of those. The author briefly summarizes the history of Asians in the United States and then discusses the stereotype of the Asian woman: exotic oriental babe or geisha girl. The racism and sexism encouraged by the U.S. army and often acted upon by U.S. servicemen in Indochina affects Asian-American women as well. They become degraded sexual objects: targets of advances by returned servicemen whose experiences in the brothels of Vietnam they extrapolate into the U.S. context. Adacho calls for the struggle of Asian-American women within the larger unity of oppressed minorities to fight racism, sexism, and capitalism. MARY LEE GEORGE-GEISSER, *"Alexandra Kollontai: Feminist and Socialist."* Kollontai's importance for history and for current questions of the women's and workers' movement lies in her fight for women's emancipation within the initial years of the Bolshevik Revolution. Kollontai saw the need for full emancipation of women. This would not come about automatically through incorporation of women into socialist production but required special efforts to equalize sexual morality, to provide services for women and to change male attitudes. ANNE COOPER, *"Japanese Women."* SARAH WOL, *"Frances."* KAY HAUGARRD, *"The Girl with Iridescent Wings."* *Political Perspectives: "From Radical Women Manifesto, Seattle."* The excerpt makes two points: (1) Minority women are destined for leadership of the women's movement because of their oppression under capitalism. (2) As exemplified by Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectic of Sex*, the "radical feminist" critique and prospectus for change is incorrect. The Manifesto asserts Engels' work based on Morgan's anthropology to show that female oppression originated with the private property system and will be overcome only with socialism. *"From Collective Child Care."* The point made here is that individualist ideology prevents women from seeing their child care problems as common and as occuring within and related to capitalist production. These problems evoke an individual feeling of guilt and despair; feminist consciousness-raising can create conceptual links between apparent personal problems of child care and the organization of the social whole. Demands for child care is a key issue for the socialist, feminist movement as a whole. *"Survival: For our Times. For our Movement."* Several poor, non-white women critique the prevailing trends of the women's movement for failing to integrate into feminist theory ideas of class and race. They call for development of feminist class analysis.

WORKING PAPERS IN CULTURAL STUDIES, No. 6 (Autumn 1974)

"Introduction." The editors note that this issue of the journal—published by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham—marks a fundamental shift in theoretical approach: "we are signalling retrospectively, from an emerging Marxist perspective, the theoretical and political limitation of the liberal radicalism from which 'cultural studies' and the Centre emerged in the early 'sixties'. . ." COLIN SPARKS, *The Abuses of Literacy."* The highly influential work (in Britain) of Richard Hoggart (*The Uses of Literacy*) is criticized for a nostalgic regret which manifests a deeper failure to have come to terms with the shift from an

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"aesthetic" to an "anthropological" conception of culture. The more theoretically sophisticated studies of Raymond Williams, on the other hand, are charged with "linguistic evasiveness" and "theoretical obscurities" which must be overcome. BRYN JONES, *"The Politics of Popular Culture."* The "conservative," "liberal-humanist," "technical-rationalist," and "vulgar-Marxist" conceptions of cultural analysis are distinguished. MICHAEL GREEN, *"Raymond Williams and Cultural Studies."* Williams' central role in the founding of the critical tradition of British cultural studies is sympathetically reviewed. IAIN CHAMBERS, *"Roland Barthes: Structuralism-Semiotics."* The basic themes of Barthes' work are reviewed from the position that the formalism of structuralist and semiotic analysis (the "skewed totalizations" of Lévi-Strauss, Foucault and Althusser) has engendered an "idealism" which fails to examine the material conditions of the practices analyzed and thus has remained caught in the ideology which was claimed to have been escaped. ROBIN RUSHER, *"What is it He's Done? The Ideology of Althusser."* An attempt is made to provide a critique which mediates between the tendency (in Britain) to either embrace Althusser in an uncritically "theoreticist" way or to denounce him in terms of an atheoretical empiricism which does not do justice to the rigor of Marx's own theoretical intentions. JOHN MEPHAM, *"The Theory of Ideology in 'Capital.'* An ambitious theory of ideology is outlined which emphasizes the cognitive elements of ideology. The dominance of bourgeois ideology is held to stem not simply from control of the production and dissemination of ideas, but from its effectiveness in making life intelligible and in guiding practice. STEVE BUTTERS, *"The Theory of Ideology in General: A Response to John Mepham's Article."* Three discrepancies in Mepham's position are noted. STUART HALL, *"Marx's Notes on Method: A 'Reading' of the '1857 Introduction'."* This "reading" emphasizes the continuity of Marx's thinking and rejects Godelier's two fundamental contradictions as the "functionalist shadow" which haunts structuralism. PHIL SLATER, *"The Aesthetic Theory of the Frankfurt School."* The Frankfurt School is charged (following Krahl) with having developed an aesthetic where art serves as "negation" rather than a weapon in revolutionary class struggle ("the practical class standpoint"). Brecht's praxis and Benjamin's complementary theory are taken to offer a perspective which does not preclude "concrete agitational struggle." CHRIS PAWLING, *"A Bibliography of the Frankfurt School."* A bibliographical essay on English translations and commentaries.

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Articles to be included in the February 1975 issue:

G. CARCHEDI: "On the Economic Identification of the New Middle Class"
D. SASSOON: "An Introduction to Luporini"
C. LUPORINI: "Reality and Historicity: Economy and Dialectics in Marxism"
E. LACLAU: "The Specificity of the Political: The Poulantzas-Miliband Debate"

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

RUSSELL JACOBY's new book, *Social Amnesia: A Critique of Conformist Psychology*, has just been released by Beacon Press. He is a *Telos* editor, and is presently working in a Boston-area bookstore. ANTONIN J. LIEHM now teaches at Richmond College on Staten Island. KAREL KOSIK has been driving a Prague trolley since losing his teaching post in 1968. MORTON SCHOOLMAN will be teaching political science next fall at Bowdoin College. DICK HOWARD teaches philosophy at SUNY at Stony Brook. He is also a *Telos* editor. CORNELIUS CASTORIADIS: see the Introduction in this issue. DAVID LOOMAN is a union business agent in San Francisco, California. JOHN ALT is a graduate student at Washington University and presently teaches sociology at the St. Louis GM plant. MARK POSTER, another *Telos* editor, teaches history at the University of California at Irvine. PATRICIA TUMMONS is doing graduate work at Washington University, and is managing editor of *Telos*. DAVID PUGH, another sociology graduate student at Washington University, will be teaching in Europe next year. MICHAEL WILSON: doesn't he draw cartoons for *Playboy*? NICK XENOS is a social science graduate student at York University. SHARON ZUKIN teaches sociology in New York City. Her book, *Beyond Marx and Tito*, has just come out. FOLKE LINDAHL is another York University graduate student.

CORRIGENDA

Dick Howard wishes to correct an error in his "Introduction to Lefort" which appeared in *Telos* 22. Lefort did *not* refer to Merleau-Ponty as "Merleau-Stalino-Ponty," but rather as "Merleau-Antigone-Ponty." The reference to "Antigone" is to the Anouilh dramatization which had been widely debated in France at that time. Howard regrets the error, and apologizes to Lefort.

Due to John Zerzan's terrible handwriting, his note in *Telos* 21 on "The Revolt Against Work" was attributed to John Zernan.

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